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Promotion and protection of the rights of children: follow-up to the outcome of the special session on children

Follow-up to the special session of the General Assembly on children

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

At the commemorative high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly held from 11 to 13 December 2007, Member States reaffirmed their commitment to the full implementation of the Declaration and the Plan of Action contained in the outcome document of the twenty-seventh special session of the Assembly, entitled "A world fit for children", adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution S-27/2 (see annex).

The present report has been prepared in response to the request of the General Assembly to the Secretary-General, in its resolution 59/261 of 23 December 2004, to prepare an updated report on progress achieved in realizing the commitments set out in "A world fit for children", with a view to identifying new challenges and making recommendations on actions needed to achieve further progress.

Using the best data available at the time of writing, the report assesses the steps taken in 2009 to achieve the goals set out in "A world fit for children" and highlights gaps and the strategic shifts necessary to meet unmet goals. During the year under review, the global economic crisis posed unique challenges, which threaten to halt or reverse progress in achieving "A world fit for children".

The present report notes that failure to achieve the goals of the document "A world fit for children" will significantly undermine efforts towards realizing the aspirations of the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. It calls for a scaled-up response by Governments to the maximum extent of their capacities, as well as increased commitments from the international community and stronger partnerships, to fulfil the goals of the outcome document.

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I. Introduction

1. The Millennium Summit (2000) and the twenty-seventh special session of the General Assembly on children (2002) set the global goals for social and child development. The outcome document of the special session, "A world fit for children" begins with a Declaration, outlining four themes in securing the well-being of children: (a) promoting healthy lives; (b) providing quality education; (c) protecting against abuse, exploitation and violence; and (d) combating HIV/AIDS. Five years after the adoption of the outcome document, the General Assembly convened a commemorative plenary meeting in December 2007 to review the outcome and progress made in implementing the Declaration and the Plan of Action of "A world fit for children".

2. The present report follows previous reports[1] and assesses the progress made during 2009 in achieving the goals of "A world fit for children", many of which correspond to the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals, almost all of which address and relate to the rights of children.

3. Globally, the total number of children dying before the age of 5 declined from 12.5 million in 1990 to 8.8 million in 2008. However, in developing countries, an estimated 195 million children under the age of 5 still suffer from stunting; more than half a million mothers still die annually as a result of childbirth; some 69 million children of primary school age are still out of school (53 per cent of them girls); and far too many children are subject to violence, exploitation and abuse. At the same time, reversing or halting the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015 remains a major public health and human rights challenge.

4. The volatility in food and fuel prices and the international economic slowdown starting in mid-2008 affected all regions in 2009. Combined with global issues, such as migration, urban expansion and climate change, the economic crisis has created significant challenges to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and to fulfilling children's rights. Increased competition for resources is taking place in a world under stress with a burgeoning population, potentially exacerbating inequalities in income and access to basic social services.

5. Advocacy and awareness of child protection issues have increased markedly. By giving high priority to children's rights, many Governments are continuing their struggle for adequate budgets. They are also pursuing comprehensive social protection policies, responsive social services and revision of justice measures for children, as well as enhancing the skills of personnel as part of their strategies to ensure a protective and conducive environment for children.

[1] A/58/333, A/59/274, A/60/207, A/61/270, A/62/259, A/63/308 and A/64/285.

II. Follow-up to the special session of the General Assembly on children

A. Planning for children

6. With the ongoing economic slowdown, analytical work on structural poverty and the immediate effect of shocks on children and women has gained prominence. Some 50 countries are in the process of undertaking national studies on child poverty and disparities, highlighting where the most vulnerable children live and how national policies and interventions could support them better. Findings are being used to more effectively engage Governments and development partners to advance policies to protect children, detailing policy options informed by the emerging evidence. At the global level, the reports of the Global Pulse[2] initiative have helped make the voices of vulnerable children and families heard in the highest political forums, including meetings of the Group of Twenty (G-20) leaders.

7. A number of national poverty reduction strategies and poverty assessments have made use of recent data from household surveys, such as Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys and demographic and health surveys, in order to ensure that the latest estimates on the various aspects of the rights of children are adequately reflected. In 2009, it was estimated that in 82 countries, the national development plans, poverty reduction strategies or the equivalents addressed key challenges faced by children.[3] Regulatory, legal, institutional or financial reforms were undertaken in 94 countries to address children's issues more effectively. In November 2009, in *The State of the World's Children Special Edition: Celebrating 20 Years of the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, UNICEF assessed the impact of the Convention on children's well-being and development during the past two decades and highlighted priority actions to ensure that the promise of the Convention on the Rights of the Child become a reality.

8. It is estimated that, by 2030, the urban population will reach 5 billion, or 60 per cent of the world population, and that 60 per cent of them will then be children under the age of 18 years. A major proportion of urban dwellers live in slums, with the total number estimated to reach 1.4 billion by the year 2020. An urgent challenge is to adjust national programmes in such a way as to best deliver results for children and protect their rights in urban contexts, with a particular focus on the poorest and most vulnerable.

9. In addition to disparities by gender, region, urban/rural divide, household income, disability and mother's education, of growing concern during recent years are the increasing disparities based on ethnicity, with numerous studies indicating widespread neglect of the rights of children belonging to minorities and indigenous populations. The global food, fuel and financial crises that erupted in 2008 led to a worldwide recession and tightening of national budgets in 2009. This has led to widespread concern that disparities in the access to basic social services will prevent children belonging to the most vulnerable communities and families from realizing their rights to survival and development.

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[2] The Global Pulse initiative was formerly called the Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System (GIVAS).

[3] See E/ICEF/2010/9.

B. Promoting the processes of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

10. November 2009 marked the twentieth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a major milestone in the historic effort to achieve a world fit for children. With its four core principles — (a) non-discrimination; (b) the best interests of the child; (c) the right to life, survival and development; and (d) respect for the views of the child — the Convention has transformed the way children are viewed and treated throughout the world. The requirement of States parties to the Convention to report regularly to the Committee on the Rights of the Child continues to ensure that Governments are responsive and held accountable for progress, and has supported marked advances in child survival, development, protection and participation around the world. In a two-day celebratory event held in Geneva in October 2009, the Committee highlighted the three significant challenges to full implementation of the Convention: (a) ensuring the dignity of the child; (b) providing the child with full possibilities for development; and (c) facilitating dialogue between adults and children in accordance with the participatory approach of the Convention. It was also an occasion to evaluate the status and implementation of the Convention, after 193 ratifications and 17 years of reporting, and to identify priority recommendations for the future, taking into consideration the two Optional Protocols to the Convention.[4]

11. Although most Governments continue to move to ensure better compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, efforts must be increased to ensure the rights of all children, especially the world's poorest girls and boys. The focus on the twentieth anniversary of the Convention represented an important reminder of the need to bridge the gaps that isolate and impoverish the most disadvantaged children, such as those belonging to minority and indigenous groups and children with disabilities.

12. In 2009, legislative reform and policy measures continued to be emphasized in many countries in all regions, lending further support to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. There was a continued shift from a traditional sense of "juvenile justice" to justice for children, a perspective — beyond children in conflict with the law — that considers all children who come into contact with justice and related systems as victims, witnesses or alleged offenders, or for other reasons, such as care, custody, or protection. Furthermore, roughly 40 countries from all regions took steps to implement the Guidelines on Justice in Matters involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime,[5] leading to new or amended legislation on children in conflict with the law, with a focus on reducing the number of children in detention.

13. To date, some 137 countries had ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography,[6] and 132 had ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on

[4] These are the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

[5] See Economic and Social Council resolution 2005/20.

[6] General Assembly resolution 54/263, annex II (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2171, No. 27531).

the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.[7] There was also progress in the reporting and monitoring process of the Convention and in implementing the actions recommended by the Committee on the Rights of the Child. In May 2010, the Secretary-General participated in the launch of a United Nations campaign for the universal ratification of both Optional Protocols by 12 February 2012, the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the protocols. The campaign is promoted jointly by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on violence against children.

14. In June 2009, the Human Rights Council decided to establish an open-ended working group to explore the possibility of elaborating an optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child to provide a communications procedure complementary to the reporting procedure under the Convention. At its first session in December 2009, the working group held a general debate, followed by expert presentations and discussions on five topics, including the reasons and timing to elaborate a communications procedure under the Convention, as well as the implications and feasibility of such a procedure.

15. In March 2010, during its thirteenth session, the Human Rights Council held its annual full-day discussion on the rights of the child, focusing on the fight against sexual violence against children. It held one panel discussion on manifestations of sexual violence against boys and girls and another on protecting boys and girls from sexual violence through prevention and response.

C. Collaboration and leveraging resources for children

16. Since the adoption of the Millennium Declaration, and as part of the effort to reduce poverty, donors have increasingly allocated official development assistance (ODA) to basic social services, such as health and education. These efforts have yielded tangible results in many areas, most notably in health.

17. At their meeting in 2009, the G-20 leaders reaffirmed their commitments to achieving their ODA pledges. They agreed to provide an additional $50 billion to support social protection, boost trade and safeguard development in low-income countries and committed $6 billion in additional concessional and flexible funding to poor countries over the next two to three years.

18. However, the slowdown in economic growth since 2008 has reduced expected levels of gross national income in the developed countries and the dollar value of the commitments pledged for 2010. While the majority of the initial commitments remain in force, some large donors have reduced or postponed the pledges they made for 2010.

19. Partnerships with foundations, non-governmental organizations and global programmes have further expanded in 2009, providing opportunities to leverage additional funding for children worldwide. Among the major contributors were

[7] General Assembly resolution 54/263, annex I (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2173, No. 27531).

Rotary International, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the GAVI Alliance, the Canadian Micronutrient Initiative and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

D. Monitoring progress

20. In 2009, UNICEF supported 73 countries in their efforts to collect data and analyse the situation of children and women. At the global level, in-depth statistical analyses on a range of issues contributed to a series of sector-specific reports, including those on diarrhoeal disease, malaria, child and maternal nutrition, access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and HIV/AIDS. The Secretary-General issued the *Millennium Development Goals Report 2010*, analysing progress from many countries on indicators relating to the lives of children and women.

21. The fourth round of Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey was launched in 2009; some 26 countries have already confirmed their participation, with another 24 expected to participate in the Survey. Several countries have moved to a triennial survey cycle to obtain more frequent coverage and impact estimates. The Survey introduced new data collection modules on early childhood development, early childbearing and hand washing. A global partnership was established with the demographic and health surveys, in order to harmonize survey tools.

22. The common United Nations database, DevInfo, has been adopted worldwide as a tool to organize, display and analyse standardized human development data. DevInfo 6.0 was rolled out in 2009, introducing new data presentation methods, enhanced web collaboration and extended mapping. Some 20 partner agencies and 132 national statistical offices have now adapted the technology. An evaluation completed in 2009 highlights the role of DevInfo in establishing national repositories of human development data, including many indicators relating to children and its contribution to data standardization.

E. Participation and self-expression of children

23. In 2009, children and young people were actively involved in global advocacy events and campaigns to promote children's rights and meaningful participation in decision-making. Children and young people's views and opinions have been gathered through several youth opinion polls, particularly in the Middle East, Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. Participatory surveys have also been conducted in many countries on knowledge, attitudes and practices, covering youth civic engagement, attitudes towards political and social participation, and media utilization to better inform public policies.

24. Youth parliaments and direct involvement in media have further increased the role of children and adolescents and their participation. These initiatives, such as Voices of Youth, have become catalysts for social inclusion and the development of related policies while fostering the participation of children from residential institutions, homeless children and children with disabilities.

25. New technologies are increasingly becoming key tools to promoting adolescents' participation. The Speak Africa Campaign for No Violence Against Children and Youth, designed to solicit youth views, ideas and solutions through an

online and mobile platform, has made steady progress in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa. For instance, in northern Uganda, where youth have experienced particular hardship and lack of access to basic services, education and employment opportunities, wireless and low-cost platforms are being used to reconnect them with other Ugandan adolescents around the globe. Furthermore, in Turkey, through advocacy efforts, the Child Rights Committee of the Turkish Parliament established an interactive web page through which adolescents can confidentially contact committee members directly.

26. The Junior 8 (J8) Summit was held in Rome in July 2009. During the week-long meeting, the J8 participants (altogether 54 adolescents aged 14-17) produced an outcome document and action plan, which they followed up on upon their return to their respective countries. A face-to-face meeting took place between selected J8 participants and the Group of Eight (G-8) leaders and the leaders of Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Mexico and South Africa.

27. In September 2009, children participated in the Summit on Climate Change at the United Nations in New York. UNICEF, in collaboration with the Secretary-General's Climate Change team, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the World Bank and non-governmental organizations, developed a participatory process for 13 international adolescents to make a presentation to the heads of States and Governments at the Summit. Over 160 children from 44 countries participated in the Children's Climate Forum organized in preparation for the Fifteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Children engaged in dialogue, negotiations and lobbying during the Convention, in order to advocate for environmental protection and safe use of natural resources, highlighting the detrimental impact of climate change on future generations.

28. In August 2009, some 550 children with their chaperones and 200 youths from 106 countries gathered in Daejeon, Republic of Korea, to participate in the 2009 Tunza International Children and Youth Conference organized by the United Nations Environment Programme. Emphasizing the theme "Climate Change: Our Challenge", the participants demonstrated how children can make a difference. The main outcomes of the conference were a statement to political leaders and commitments from the children and youths on their actions following the conference with regard to the "Seal the Deal" campaign rallies, regional action plans and a newly constituted youth advisory council.

III. Progress in the four major goal areas

A. Promoting healthy lives

29. Progress continues in reducing mortality for children under the age of 5, but it is not yet sufficient to achieve Millennium Development Goal 4. In 1990, an estimated 12.5 million children died before their fifth birthday. By 2008, this figure had been reduced to 8.8 million, the lowest number on record. Moreover, the rate of decline in under-five mortality increased to an average annual rate of 2.3 per cent for 2000-2008, compared with 1.4 per cent for 1990-2000. However, reducing neonatal mortality has been far less successful than that for children aged more than one month.

30. Much of the progress in reducing child mortality is attributable to increased scale-up of specific interventions: measles immunization, distribution of insecticide-treated mosquito nets and vitamin A supplementation. Improvements in coverage were, in turn, driven by a strategy of integrated campaigns, such as supplementary immunization activities (24 countries in 2008) or child health days and weeks (34 countries in 2008). Trends in coverage of immunization continue to be positive: global immunization rates for three doses of combined diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus vaccine are at their highest level ever (82 per cent in 2008). However, coverage of curative services, especially for pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria, continues to be low. Further acceleration will require strengthening of health services and strategies to increase access, including extending services to the community level.

31. Data available in 2009 indicate that 63 countries were on track towards achieving Millennium Development Goal 1 target 1C of a 50 per cent reduction, between 1990 and 2015, in underweight prevalence among children under the age of 5. This compares with only 46 countries on track just three years ago, based on trend data from 1990 to 2004. Stunting affects approximately 195 million children under the age of 5 in the developing world. Since 1990, stunting prevalence in the developing world has declined from 40 per cent to 29 per cent. A number of countries have decreased stunting rates significantly, including Bangladesh, Eritrea, Mauritania and Viet Nam, underscoring that marked improvements can be achieved. Children in rural areas are more likely to be underweight than urban children and the gap between the richest households and the poorest remains substantial in all regions. In southern Asia, for example, 60 per cent of children in the poorest areas are underweight, compared to 25 per cent of children in the richest households.

32. There has been mixed progress on Millennium Development Goal 5 to reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio between 1990 and 2015. Each year, hundreds of thousands of women die from pregnancy-related causes; almost all these maternal deaths occur in the developing world, with the vast majority concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa and southern Asia. The risks are highest for both the mother and the child when pregnancy occurs at a very young age. In 2007, adolescents aged 15 to 19 years had an estimated 14 million births. Encouragingly, in southern Asia, the adolescent birth rate (for girls and women aged 15 to 19 years) declined from 89 per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 53 per 1,000 live births in 2007. However, in sub-Saharan Africa, available data indicate that there has been no significant progress: 124 per 1,000 live births in 1990, compared to 121 per 1,000 live births in 2007.

33. Maternal health is another area in which the gap between the rich and the poor is conspicuous. While almost all births are attended by skilled health personnel in the developed countries, only 38 per cent of women receive such care when giving birth in the least developed countries. Disparities in access to care during pregnancy are also striking in developing countries, with women in the richest households nearly twice as likely as the poorest women to visit a skilled health worker at least once before giving birth.

34. Since the 1990s, the proportion of pregnant women in developing regions who had at least one antenatal care visit increased from around 64 per cent to 80 per cent. Although there has been a general increase in the presence of skilled birth attendants at delivery in all developing regions, the percentage of births attended by skilled birth attendants is still very low in sub-Saharan Africa (46 per cent) and in

southern Asia (42 per cent). The ability of women to choose when and how many children they will have is an important aspect that will affect maternal morbidity and mortality. During 2008, modern contraceptive use prevented 188 million unintended pregnancies, 1.2 million newborn deaths and 230,000 maternal deaths. Although there has been a modest increase in contraceptive use in many developing countries since 2000, the proportion of demand for birth spacing or limiting that is being met by use of contraception is closely linked to household wealth and location. Among the wealthiest quintiles, this proportion of demand satisfied is rarely under 80 per cent. Among the poorest quintile, less than a quarter of the demand is met.

35. The continued lack of progress in reducing maternal mortality can be traced to a number of factors: continued high fertility in some areas; limited use of contraception; too many adolescent pregnancies; inadequate prenatal and postnatal care visits; too few deliveries attended by skilled birth attendants; lack of emergency obstetric care facilities; inadequate maternal nutrition; malaria; and HIV in pregnancy. As noted by the Secretary-General in a recent report,[8] a policy that is animated by the right to health is likely to be equitable, inclusive, non-discriminatory, participatory and evidence-based. In the context of maternal mortality policies, these features help to empower women and ensure that policies are likely to be sustainable, robust and effective.

36. Vitamin A supplementation coverage continued to be high among the least developed countries, with 88 per cent of children fully covered with two doses in 2008. The coverage more than doubled in the least developed countries, rising from 41 per cent in 2000 to 88 per cent in 2008, and it is expected that this trend has continued in 2009. There has also been progress in the area of elimination of iodine deficiency disorder; in 2008, 72 per cent of households in developing countries were consuming iodized salt.

37. Progress in the area of infant and young child feeding has been modest. In the developing world as a whole, the exclusive breastfeeding rate has increased only slightly, from 33 per cent in 1995 to 37 per cent in 2008. However, some 16 countries, through a combination of sound policies, legislative enforcement and community-based support, have shown significant increases of at least 20 percentage points in the past 10 to 15 years.

38. The food and financial crises have provided an opportunity to highlight nutrition in the global policy discourse. Nutrition security is increasingly part of the dialogue on food security, livelihoods, social protection and the move to increase investments in agriculture. There is greater alignment between the key United Nations agencies engaged in nutrition; the United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition is being strengthened and several major donors have been reviewing and revising their nutrition strategies and are dedicating resources to that sector.

39. The 2010 update on progress on sanitation and drinking water confirms that many regions are moving towards greater access to safe drinking water. As of 2008, some 87 per cent of the world population had access to safe drinking water supply.

[8] In the 2006 report, "The right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health", the Secretary-General transmits to the General Assembly the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health (A/61/338).

Still, huge disparities between regions, countries and rural and urban areas remain. Progress in this sector must therefore be viewed in this context, recognizing that equity concerns are significant. In all regions, progress in increasing coverage was made primarily in rural areas. Drinking-water coverage in urban areas of the developing world, which stood at 94 per cent in 2008, has remained almost unchanged since 1990. Meanwhile, globally, four out of five people who are still without access to an improved drinking water source live in rural areas. Nearly 1.5 million children die every year due to diarrhoea, which could be prevented through good water supply, sanitation and hygiene.

40. The world is badly off track in reaching the sanitation target of Millennium Development Goal 7. Between 1990 and 2008, the proportion of people without improved sanitation decreased by only 7 percentage points. In 2008, some 48 per cent of the population in developing regions was without basic sanitation. Disparities between rural and urban areas remain daunting worldwide, with only 40 per cent of rural populations covered. While 77 per cent of the population in the richest 20 per cent of households use improved sanitation facilities, the share is only 16 per cent of those in the poorest households in sub-Saharan Africa. To meet target 3 of Millennium Development Goal 7, an average of 218 million people per year will need to begin using improved sanitation facilities. Substantial coordinated global efforts are needed to ensure that the sector is given the priority and support needed. Among sanitation practices, the one that poses the greatest threat to human health and child survival is open defecation.

41. Sanitation and Water for All: A Global Framework for Action, launched in September 2008, is an alliance of national Governments, donors, civil society organizations and other development partners working together to address water and sanitation needs by increasing political will and improving aid effectiveness through mobilization and better targeting of resources for water supply and sanitation. The initiative seeks to align donors behind the regional and national priorities set by developing countries and to ensure that aid is delivered more effectively. Both the performance of donors and of developing countries will be monitored and reported on regularly, thus creating a mutual and transparent accountability framework.

42. Overall progress in young child development is constrained by insufficient knowledge of care for young children (and sometimes lead to poor care-giving practices); limited access to health and other services for young children; fragmented policies that often do not address the needs of young children holistically; and insufficient budget allocations. Comprehensive programming for young children that includes early stimulation and psychosocial care is very limited. The preliminary analysis of Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 3 data on early childhood development and family care practices showed that more than 88 per cent of parents are using violent methods in disciplining their children; less than 30 per cent of babies are exclusively breastfed; less than 50 per cent of mothers or caregivers are engaged in early learning activities with young children; and the home environment is supportive of early learning in less than 50 per cent of families.

B. Providing quality education

43. The evidence described in the present report is clear: despite the central role that women and children play in development, progress has been slowest on the Millennium Development Goals relating to their health. In order to address this imbalance, the Secretary-General spearheaded a global effort for women's and children's health, bringing together all key players form Governments, civil society and the corporate sector to craft a plan to push for the achievement of Goals 4 and 5. The resulting Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health outlines the key areas where action is urgently required to enhance financing, strengthen policy and improve service delivery, calling on all concerned parties to join forces and coordinate action to maximize the impact of interventions on the ground.

44. Some 69 million children of primary school age were still out of school in 2008, despite a reduction by 37 million since 1999. Of these, some 53 per cent were girls. Almost half of these children (31 million) live in sub-Saharan Africa and more than a quarter (18 million) in southern Asia. Gross enrolments in post-primary education are low; an estimated 185 million children of secondary school age worldwide are missing out on secondary education and an estimated 127 million of these children were still attending primary schools, occupying places that could otherwise accommodate children of primary school age currently out of school. Household cost-barriers at the primary and secondary levels continue to be significant.

45. While global pre-primary gross enrolment rates have grown, from 33 per cent in 1999 to 41 per cent in 2007, coverage of pre-primary education remains low. Furthermore, a majority of countries are not taking the necessary policy measures to support the provision of care to children below the age of three. The percentage of households reached by parenting or equivalent family or community care programmes remains also low.

46. In developing regions overall, girls in the poorest 20 per cent of households are three and a half times more likely to be out of school than girls in the richest households and four times more likely to be out of school than boys from the richest households. In countries close to achieving universal primary education, children with disabilities are the majority of those excluded.

47. Despite progress on gender equity, there are still substantial gaps. Inequalities, disparities and multiple forms of exclusion, related to poverty, conflict, natural disaster, urban/rural disparities, displacement, gender, disability, HIV/AIDS, ethnicity, religion, and caste, are persistent and often hidden in many countries. These disparities are dramatically magnified at the secondary level.

48. The number of countries affected by crises and natural disasters is on the increase, and these emergencies continue to have severe psychosocial impacts on children, together with deprivation of access to education and deepened exclusion. Some 65 per cent of children who are out of school live in 33 conflict-affected countries. In the next decade, up to 175 million children are likely to be affected every year by natural disasters resulting from climate change. An increasingly large number of programmes focus on older out-of-school children as a means to respond to the needs of those who are no longer eligible for primary schooling. The number of countries that have national education plans that include measures to reduce gender and other disparities has increased rapidly, from 74 in 2005 to 110 in 2008.

49. The impact of the global economic crisis on education is of major concern. Although it is too early to make substantive and extensive assessments on the education consequences of the present crisis, there already are signs of vulnerability in many locations: stressed education budgets, increases in school fees (leading to drops in enrolment), withdrawal of children from school (accompanied by increased child labour), rising food insecurity and malnutrition, and exacerbation of disparities. Rapid urbanization is increasingly found with worsening conditions in urban slums, negatively affecting school access (more than in rural areas) and accelerating rates of violence affecting children and young people.

50. Child-friendly schools and similar models continue to be implemented by countries as a way of addressing the challenge of increasing quality in education. By the end of 2008, an estimated 61 countries had adopted child-friendly schools quality standards, up from 43 countries in 2005. Through the child-friendly schools approach, interventions in safe water supply and sanitation were particularly effective in increasing school enrolment and attendance. Child-friendly schools quality standards are expected to mitigate dropout rates for girls, as poor sanitation facilities, including the lack of facilities for menstrual hygiene, particularly affect girls, causing many to drop out of school.

51. Significant progress is also being achieved in education in emergencies and post-crisis situations. A major thrust has been to emphasize the quality of education while responding to emergencies with a simultaneous focus on scaling-up actions for restoring education. This included interventions to restore learning, including innovations in emergency education supply management, and the development and use of improved education emergency supply packages. Improving quality in crisis-affected contexts was addressed through the application of the child-friendly schools approach, life-skills programmes and safer child-friendly schools designs in reconstruction programmes.

52. Non-formal accelerated learning programmes have been used to address educational needs among over-age learners. Initiatives to strengthen decentralized and community-based models of service delivery have also been developed and expanded, such as home-based schooling and community-based school programmes. Progress was also achieved in strengthening emergency preparedness in the education sector, drawing on broader-based partnerships, including the country-level education clusters. Risk reduction strategies are an area of emphasis in a growing number of regions and countries, including conflict risk reduction, through peace education programmes, and natural disaster risk reduction.

C. Protecting against abuse, exploitation and violence

53. Positive trends that contribute to strengthening child protection systems were evident in the past year. More countries have begun to map and assess their child protection systems, in order to identify where these need further support. There was also increased recognition that all types of social protection, regardless of target populations, need to be child-sensitive. There was a marked trend towards capacity-building and accreditation of social workers, as well as a shift towards a more comprehensive approach to family support and alternative care of children, including the development of integrated service packages. The approval of the United Nations Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children without Parental

Care[9] gave extra impetus to develop standards of care and provide technical recommendations to improve care in a number of countries. There has also been a marked shift from traditional "juvenile justice" approaches to justice for all children, which includes not only children in conflict with the law, but also child victims and witnesses of crimes.

54. Improving birth registration continues to be a challenge. UNICEF and other partners, such as the organization Plan International, have encouraged the integration of birth registration into health services; at the same time, innovative methods, such as mobile birth registration, have expanded services to vulnerable populations.

55. The institutionalization of children with disabilities is still a major challenge, but progress has been made, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, in systematically integrating across sectors the improved protection of children with disabilities.

56. The follow-up to the United Nations study on violence against children (A/61/299) gained further momentum with the appointment in 2009 of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on violence against children. Partially in response to global advocacy, an additional six countries ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, bringing the total number of signatories to 137. In addition to revised legal and policy frameworks, the institutional response to violence and sexual exploitation was also strengthened at the country level through intersectoral coordination, capacity-building of professionals and providing support to child victims and witnesses of violence, sexual exploitation and abuse. Work to address armed violence was strengthened through the finalization of an agreement for an inter-agency armed violence prevention programme, which will promote the integration of armed violence prevention and reduction into development frameworks at global and local levels.

57. In September 2009, several United Nations system organizations, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the private sector launched a major global initiative on preventing sexual violence against girls. It supports the undertaking of national population-based studies on sexual violence, as well as programmatic interventions and advocacy. The campaign will galvanize the two-pillared approach of strengthening systems and supporting social change in favour of children's rights. While the focus is on addressing sexual violence against girls, this provides an opportunity for a broader approach to preventing and responding to violence against girls and boys alike. The adoption in 2009 of Security Council resolution 1888 (2009) on sexual violence in armed conflict is another milestone in efforts to create a protective environment and end sexual violence.

58. While 2008 marked the beginning of progress towards addressing certain harmful social practices in a number of countries, the past year constituted a phase of acceleration and expansion, including for the Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting set up in 2007 by the United Nations Population Fund and UNICEF, as well as the application of a social norms perspective to child marriage,

[9] The Guidelines on Alternative Care of Children without Parental Care were adopted by the General Assembly on 20 November 2009, marking the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

child labour, child discipline and other child protection violations. Significant work was done in 2009 to foster partnerships with the private sector to promote social change for improved child protection. This involved work with corporate partners (a) on child labour, particularly in the agricultural sector; and (b) on combating the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism and violence against children in sport.

59. The application of a systems approach in emergencies was further strengthened through partnerships with social welfare ministries and social workers on child protection, helping them in capacity-building efforts, as well as through upgrading of the Inter-Agency Child Protection Information Management System. This will also be an important tool for reinforcing child protection systems in transition and long-term development contexts through support to case management and a continuity of care for children. In addition to strengthening child protection systems in emergencies, progress in 2009 continued to address urgent protection issues, including child disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, separated and unaccompanied children, psychosocial support, gender-based violence and mine action.

60. A major milestone for child protection in emergencies was the approval in 2009 of Security Council resolution 1882 (2009), which expanded the trigger for listing of parties in the annexes to the annual reports of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict, to include those parties to armed conflict that engage in patterns of killing and maiming of children or rape and other sexual violence against children in situations of armed conflict. This strengthens international efforts to end impunity against those committing grave violations against children in contravention of applicable international law. The monitoring and reporting mechanism established under Security Council resolutions 1612 (2005) and 1882 (2009) offers opportunities to enhance coordination, advance accurate and reliable information-gathering for better situation analysis, enhance accountability of perpetrators and implement more effective advocacy and programmatic activities for children and women. Discussions are under way to seek synergies of efforts between Security Council resolutions 1882 (2009) and 1888 (2009).

61. The available evidence on child protection issues continued to increase in 2009 through Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys, demographic and health surveys and other household surveys, gender analysis of key child protection issues, inclusion of child protection data in national reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child and in national statistics, support to child protection information management systems and specialized databases, and evaluations and studies related to child protection. In 2009, UNICEF published *Progress for Children: A Report Card on Child Protection*, the first comprehensive resource on child protection statistics.

D. Combating HIV/AIDS

62. Worldwide, the number of people newly infected with HIV peaked in 1996 at 3.5 million and has since declined to 2.7 million in 2008, while the number of deaths due to AIDS peaked at 2.2 million in 2004 and declined to 2 million in 2008. Still, HIV remains globally the leading cause of death for women of reproductive age.

63. Achieving universal access to antiretroviral treatment will not be possible unless HIV testing and counselling rates increase sharply. With an increased focus on providing HIV testing and counselling in health services and increased use of rapid testing technologies, there has been a sharp increase in the number of people tested for HIV. In 39 low-income and middle-income countries, for example, the total reported number of HIV tests more than doubled between 2007 and 2008. In 66 low-income and middle-income countries, the reported number of HIV testing and counselling sites increased by approximately 35 per cent, from 25,000 in 2007 to 33,600 in 2008. Encouragingly, the number of women receiving antiretroviral drugs for prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV more than quadrupled, from 10 per cent in 2004 to 45 per cent in 2008. However, only 21 per cent of pregnant women received HIV testing and counselling, and only one third of those identified as HIV-positive during antenatal care were subsequently assessed for their eligibility to receive antiretroviral therapy for their own health. Successful rapid scale-up of services for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV in Botswana, Namibia and Swaziland has led to more than 90 per cent of women already receiving antiretroviral prophylaxis for preventing mother-to-child transmission of HIV. Globally, adult women are slightly advantaged, compared with adult men, in accessing antiretroviral therapy; sustained access beyond childbirth, however, requires further attention.

64. These victories on the road to combating HIV/AIDS also saw some uphill struggles and challenges. Some 70 per cent of people in need of antiretroviral treatment did not have access to treatment and only 30 per cent of young males and 19 per cent of young females in developing countries have accurate and comprehensive knowledge of HIV. Comprehensive male and female condom programming, an essential prevention strategy, has gained momentum in recent years. However, coverage levels remain low. Little attention has been given, in both prevention and treatment contact, to assessing the fertility desires (voluntary decisions to space or limit births) of persons living with HIV. Tragically, an estimated 17.5 million children under the age of 18 had lost one or both parents to AIDS by 2008. The vast majority of these children (14.1 million) live in sub-Saharan Africa. In resource-limited settings where access to antiretroviral treatment remains a problem, lack of nutritional care or inadequate access to safe water and sanitation can contribute to increased mortality of affected individuals.

65. Even though the pattern of HIV transmission varies across regions, in all countries it is strongly linked to gender, sexual behaviour and discrimination. These factors make women and girls, in particular from food-insecure families, more vulnerable to the virus and its impacts. In sub-Saharan Africa, women account for approximately 60 per cent of all estimated HIV infections, and young women and girls remain disproportionately affected by HIV. This is a major concern in emergency contexts, where gender-based violence, risky sexual behaviours and poor access to services and information are common. Despite the existence of effective interventions for HIV prevention, the inadequate tailoring of interventions to epidemic type, the low coverage of interventions and ongoing barriers, in many countries, to accessing services by the populations most at risk have led to a limited impact. For example, less than 10 per cent of injecting drug users and less than 30 per cent of men who have sex with men in low-income and middle-income countries are able to access HIV services.

66. While the recent economic crisis raised concerns about how assistance for women and girls will be sustained and expanded, it also encouraged countries to be more efficient in integrating programmes and support for the systems underpinning them. Over the next biennium, the International Health Partnership will continue to offer significant opportunities for strengthening HIV/AIDS responses and better combining them with efforts to achieve wider health outcomes. The engagement in the International Health Partnership by HIV actors will enable them to better define the health systems requirements for a further HIV/AIDS scale-up, be they related to health system performance, health-sector funding, community and stakeholder participation or coordination with other critical sectors, such as social welfare, education, labour, food security or justice. The joint health systems funding platform of the World Bank, the GAVI Alliance and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria will potentially harmonize and rationalize funding for HIV/AIDS prevention and health-systems strengthening. It will be essential that the specific and unmet needs of children, young people, girls and women are kept central to such initiatives.

67. The key objective now is to break the trajectory of the AIDS epidemic by ensuring adequate focus on HIV prevention. There is compelling evidence of the cost-effectiveness of prevention. Judicious invesiment, however, requires better analysis of the effectiveness of programmes designed to change behaviour offered through schools, health and social services, mass media and the community. Available data provides a guide, but there has been as yet little measurement of programme impact. Scaling up support for children affected by HIV/AIDS will remain a priority for 2010-2011 and beyond. A number of partners have increasingly shown interest in supporting social protection approaches that are both child-sensitive and HIV/AIDS-sensitive.

68. During the period 2008-2009, progress was the strongest in prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, paediatric treatment and children affected by HIV/AIDS. The challenge in the near future is to maintain this momentum within the above-mentioned programmatic areas and scale up the work on prevention of HIV transmission among young people and adolescents.

IV. The way forward

69. The existence of persistent, significant and, in some cases, widening inequalities in outcomes for children suggests the need to adopt strategies, policies and programmes that will achieve accelerated progress with a specific focus on the most vulnerable, underserved children and the poorest communities. Because the needs are greatest among the most vulnerable children, the returns in children's lives saved and enriched can be great in reaching these groups. It would be strategically short-sighted to leave the most challenging areas for later.

70. There is growing evidence that equity-focused strategies, such as community-based treatment of the main childhood illnesses; community-led total sanitation; "reaching every district" to bolster health services for children; user-fee abolition for primary schools; and cash transfers for children affected by HIV/AIDS, can be effective. This knowledge and the growing body of evidence on interventions that work needs to be put into action for those children and families who remain most in need.

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Promotion and protection of human rights: human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

Draft programme of activities for the International Year for People of African Descent

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/169 and focuses on a draft programme of activities to mark the International Year for People of African Descent.

* A/65/150.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 64/169, the General Assembly proclaimed the year beginning on 1 January 2011 the International Year for People of African Descent, with a view to strengthening national actions and regional and international cooperation for the benefit of people of African descent in relation to their full enjoyment of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights, their participation and integration in all political, economic, social and cultural aspects of society, and the promotion of a greater knowledge of and respect for their diverse heritage and culture.

2. In resolution 64/169, the General Assembly encouraged Member States, the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates and existing resources, and civil society to make preparations for and identify possible initiatives that could contribute to the success of the Year. It requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its sixty-fifth session a report containing a draft programme of activities for the Year, taking into account the views and recommendations of Member States, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent of the Human Rights Council and other relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, as appropriate.

3. General Assembly resolution 64/169 was adopted without a vote, indicating the wide consensus in the international community regarding the importance of an International Year for People of African Descent.

II. Implementation of resolution 64/169

4. In compliance with paragraph 3 of resolution 64/169, on 18 February 2010 notes verbales were sent to Member States and the other parties with which the Secretary-General was requested to consult in preparing a draft agenda of activities for the International Year, inviting their views on the matter. A follow-up note verbale was sent on 19 May 2010. Contributions were received from six Member States, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent and the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat.

5. The present report contains summaries of the contributions received in response to the notes verbales. The report concludes with a draft agenda of activities that takes into account the views and recommendations of the parties referred to in paragraph 3 of resolution 64/169, while being mindful of the stipulation in paragraph 2 of the resolution that specialized agencies within the United Nations system should make preparations for and identify possible initiatives that could contribute to the success of the Year, within their respective mandates and existing resources.

III. Views and recommendations received from Member States

Algeria

[Original: French]
[5 May 2010]

6. Algeria is planning to organize a number of events and activities during 2011 to mark the International Year for People of African Descent.

7. One of the aims of these events is to facilitate the integration of people of African descent into Algerian society. Artists and intellectuals from several, mainly African, countries will take part.

8. The programme of planned activities and events is as follows:

(a) Dance and choreography:

(i) International festival of traditional dance;

(ii) Arab-African cultural folk dance festival;

(iii) International cultural festival of modern dance;

(b) Music:

(i) Timgad international cultural festival;

(ii) Tergui local music and song festival;

(iii) International "Diwan" music festival Djemila international festival;

(iv) International festival of Andalusian and early music;

(v) International jazz music festival;

(vi) Abelsse-tin Hinan, Ahaggar international arts festival;

(vii) Samaa Sufi international music festival;

(viii) Ahellil national cultural festival;

(ix) Aid Sebeiba local cultural festival;

(c) Comic strips and literature:

(i) International cultural comic strip festival;

(ii) International festival of young people's literature and books;

(iii) International cultural book festival: Algiers international book fair;

(d) Plastic arts:

(i) International cultural festival of miniatures and decorative arts;

(ii) International cultural festival of contemporary pictorial art.

9. As part of the activities planned for 2011, Algeria will host a major event: "Tlemcen, capital of Islamic culture", intended to promote the cultural wealth of Islamic civilization and its contribution to other civilizations. The project will feature cultural and religious festivities, including cultural weeks of Islamic

countries, thematic symposiums and conferences, theatre, poetry, exhibitions, traditional music and dance.

10. This event will provide an opportunity for all Muslim countries to promote the cultural wealth of Islamic civilization. Muslim African countries will present the diversity of Africa's Islamic heritage and encourage promotion of the culture of the African Muslim population.

11. Furthermore, as part of its contribution to cultural projects launched by the African Union to conserve and enhance the African cultural heritage, Algeria will be home to the future Great African Museum, which will be a platform for new information and communications technologies that balance the requirements of museums and the preservation of cultural identities.

Brazil

[Original: English]
[9 June 2010]

12. Brazil attaches great importance to the Slave Route Project, launched by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1994. Brazil believes the project should be expanded and further promoted, given its relevance for the re-establishment of historical accounts of slavery and the slave trade.

13. Brazil also deems it important to give additional support to research for and publishing of printed and audio-visual material related to the history of peoples of African descent in the places to which they were forcibly displaced.

14. It is high time to publicize the struggle and strategies of resistance of populations that were victims of slavery and the slave trade. It is important to recognize the role played by these people in the building of culturally rich and diversified societies and to acknowledge that peoples of African descent represented the base of the labour force in a complex social and economic system, the effects of which continue to endure. As a result these people and their descendents are at a disadvantage with regard to the enjoyment of rights and opportunities compared with other ethnic or social groups.

15. Such an initiative would represent a step forward in the understanding of the historical formation of various countries which, despite the longstanding consequences of slavery and the slave trade, have come to regard the promotion of equality as an essential value for democracy, pluralism and intercultural dialogue.

16. The proposed project could be implemented either as an extension of the Slave Route Project, or through the creation of a group of experts tasked to launch a publication on the topic. In either case, Brazil proposes the preparation and publication of, inter alia, maps, educational materials, films and public exhibitions on the topic.

17. This informative material should aim at portraying the actual social, economic and political situation of peoples of African descent and at stimulating debate on discriminatory patterns inherited from slavery. It would also foster dialogue and promote inclusion in modern societies, based on a shared sense of racial and ethnic equality.

18. Brazil also proposes the holding of a world conference on people of African descent, to discuss their historic contribution to the creation of new societies in the places to which they were forcibly brought and how their contribution is represented in different areas, such as politics, the labour market and the media. Brazil believes that such a conference should occur in parallel with an arts festival comprising dance and music performances, theatre, films and art exhibitions, which would increase the visibility to the initiative.

Ecuador

[Original: Spanish]
[7 July 2010]

19. Ecuador intends to carry out the following activities in the context of the International Year for People of African Descent:

(a) Dissemination of information:

(i) Presentation of the International Year at the national level, throughout the country through a campaign using various communications media;

(ii) Awareness-raising days focusing on economic, social and cultural issues relating to Ecuadoreans of African descent, organized by universities, Government institutions and non-governmental organizations, with the assistance of experts, researchers (of African and non-African descent, academics, nationals and foreigners, and men and women), campaigners for Ecuadoreans of African descent throughout the country and members of civil society;

(iii) Publications;

(iv) Creation and publication of a logo for the International Year;

(b) Participation:

(i) Involvement of the Ecuadorean population of African descent in the preparation of laws that are fundamental to their daily lives, such as the mining law, the water law, the equality law, the property law, the territorial boundaries law, etc.;

(ii) Analysis and consensus between Government institutions and Ecuadoreans of African descent in order to establish affirmative action measures in areas that are considered to require immediate intervention (employment and education, for example);

(iii) Contribution to development of measures to establish jurisprudence related to the crimes of racism, racial discrimination and racist hatred;

(iv) Regional participation of Government representatives, social organizations of Ecuadoreans of African descent and civil society in technical cooperation programmes in the field and exchanges of experience in countries where similar processes are under way (e.g. Brazil);

(v) Education and training on international instruments related to racism and racial discrimination provided to social organizations and civil society;

(c) Establishment of public policies:

In this area there is already a road map contained in the plurinational plan against racial discrimination and ethnic and cultural exclusion. The following actions are considered a priority:

(i) Economic rights:

- Affirmative action relating to employment;
- Affirmative action in social programmes related to economic inclusion;
- Productive projects;

(ii) Social rights:

- Housing;
- Legalization of housing plots;

(iii) Territorial rights:

- Granting of legal title to collective territory;
- Creation of constituencies for territories of indigenous peoples and people of African descent;
- Prior consultation;

(iv) Education programme:

- Production of intercultural texts;
- A quota plan for peoples and nationalities in the middle and higher education systems;
- A grants programme to access higher and postgraduate education;
- Incentives for Ecuadorean researchers of African descent;

(v) Cultural:

- Exchanges among leaders of the organizational process for Ecuadoreans of African descent at the regional level (Latin America).

Guatemala

[Original: Spanish]
[15 April 2010]

20. The Presidential Commission against Discrimination and Racism against Indigenous Peoples in Guatemala intends to carry out the following activities:

(a) An international seminar on the International Year, with the intention to submit to the Presidency a request for recognition of and respect for the contribution of the Garifuna people, and obtain an agreement between the different actors aimed at capacity-building for the Garifuna people;

(b) Activities with Garifuna women aimed at generating productive capacity;

(c) Dissemination of information and educational activities among diverse sectors of the population.

21. The Presidential Secretariat for Planning and Programming intends to carry out the following:

(a) Create a permanent forum to use history to raise the self-esteem and sense of belonging of Guatemalans of African descent, and to create a repository for the real history of this population;

(b) Promote an integrated development plan for the Garifuna people, working in a team made up of representatives of Garinagu organizations and experts from the General Directorate for Cultural Development and Strengthening of Cultures.

22. The Ministry of Culture and Sport intends to carry out the following:

(a) Intercultural dialogues;

(b) A project on developing the Garifuna culture;

(c) Forums on diversity and inclusion;

(d) Strengthening the Garifuna language through research and linguistic diagnostics;

(e) Dissemination of cultural material at the national level (audio-visual, exhibitions, expo-sales and written material, among others things);

(f) In the area of non-physical cultural patrimony, strengthen the project to encourage and safeguard the Garifuna culture currently being executed by the Ministry of Culture and Sport;

(g) Promotion of music and dance, publication of literary works and diverse cultural activities in the Department of Izabal.

23. The General Directorate of Intercultural Bilingual Education is considering the following:

(a) Dissemination of the declaration of the International Year for People of African Descent in educational institutions throughout the country, especially to regions where people of African descent live;

(b) Creation of a study-grants programme for children and young people of African descent to guarantee access to education at the primary and secondary levels;

(c) Support for the creation of a study-grants programme for young people and adults of African descent to guarantee access to education at the technical and professional levels;

(d) Activities to commemorate significant dates for the country's people of African descent;

(e) Drafting of documents that strengthen the identity of students of African descent;

(f) Educational activities aimed at reducing drug addiction, similar vices and contagious diseases.

24. Activities planned by the Ministry of Culture and Sport include elements specifically directed at a particular section of the population as follows:

(a) Intercultural dialogues: the general public;

(b) Project on developing the Garifuna culture: cultural activists (women and men);

(c) Forums on diversity and inclusion: civil servants;

(d) Dissemination of expressions of culture: children and young people;

(e) Promotion of music and dance, publication of literary works and diverse cultural activities: the general public.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[25 May 2010]

25. The following are recommendations and possible initiatives that could be included in a draft programme of activities for the International Year:

(a) Legislative actions:

(i) Constitutional recognition:

- Although the political Constitution of Mexico does not recognize this social group explicitly, it clearly prohibits all forms of discrimination;
- The Constitution of the State of Oaxaca establishes, in article 16, that the law will protect Mexican communities of African descent and indigenous peoples of any other community from other states of Mexico that for any reason reside in the territory of the State of Oaxaca;
- Legislative working groups need to be created to deal with the subject and seek institutional commitment for the revision of the various state initiatives in favour of people of African descents;

(b) Actions to strengthen identity:

(i) Interculturalism: The recognition of Mexico as a multicultural nation has been a great step forward in building a democratic country. However, Mexico must continue on to interculturalism, which presupposes ending monoculturalism, accepting plurality, making all cultures equal, evaluating and reorganizing relations between cultures and peoples, and insisting on fair communication and intercultural dialogue, until a degree of solidarity and harmony has been achieved;

(ii) Self-affirmation: This will contribute to communities of African descent recognizing themselves as such, with the goal of them valuing their cultural characteristics and eliminating those stigmas that they have historically endured, such as "dark-skinned", "coast-dwellers" or foreigners;

(c) Actions to generate information: To resolve the problem of lack of statistical data, it is important to unite efforts nationally to develop studies and statistics on the problems and number of inhabitants of African descent. This

information will allow the development of specific programmes and public policies to combat the structural problems that these communities have suffered;

(d) Actions to eradicate and combat discrimination:

(i) Encourage a culture of denouncing discrimination:

- The problem of discrimination in Mexico is difficult to quantify, particularly because there are insufficient complaints related to discrimination against communities of African descent. It is therefore important to strengthen a culture of recognizing rights and denouncing their violation;

- Non-discrimination requires that the specific ethnic and cultural identity of people of African descent be legally recognized so that they are represented at the local and federal levels and have access to the economic and social rights that will allow them to develop as a people and overcome marginalization;

(ii) Education: an effective way of making the problems of people of African descent more visible is through state and municipal education and training, with the objective that these communities are recognized as subjects of law and as contributors to the history of the nation and the cultural diversity of the country;

(iii) Production and distribution of news items: Positioning the theme in the mass media will permit the implementation and follow-up of joint activities to eradicate discrimination towards, and lack of visibility of, these communities. Informative news items that are distributed to journalists will help place the theme on the national agenda;

(iv) Organization of an international seminar: International forums organized every year by the National Council for the Prevention of Discrimination have allowed the professionalization of themes in the academic sphere, within civil society organizations and among individuals involved in the development of public policies. Such a forum would promote exchange of experience and information on the subject and commitments from legislative authorities.

United States of America

[Original: English]
[1 July 2010]

26. The United States of America believes that there are concrete actions and activities under way around the world and within the United Nations. For its part, the United States has begun efforts to collaborate bilaterally with both Colombia and Brazil to promote cooperation, understanding and an exchange of information (including best practices) to eliminate racial and ethnic discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity for all. The United States and Colombia signed an action plan on racial and ethnic equality earlier this year and held the first meeting of a steering committee on 4 June in Bogotá. On 20 and 21 May the United States hosted the fourth meeting of the steering group on the United States-Brazil joint action plan to eliminate racial and ethnic discrimination and promote equality in

Atlanta, Georgia. In 2011, the United States will continue to support exchanges related to these agreements that engage communities of African descent.

27. Within the United Nations system, initiatives that could be highlighted or enhanced during the Year include:

(a) UNESCO is partnering with Purdue University in April 2011 on a conference about philosophical dialogue between Africa and the Americas. The conference will bring together over 150 academics from three regions of the world for three days of discussions. The United States suggests that this conference be used to commemorate the International Year for People of African Descent;

(b) The UNESCO Youth Forum, held prior to the UNESCO General Conference, brings together young delegates from all over the world to exchange views, share experiences, reflect together and, above all, identify common concerns and problems. The seventh Forum will be held in 2011 and the United States suggests that the theme of the Forum in 2011 could be related to the International Year;

(c) The UNESCO World Heritage Programme could explore the possibility of a transboundary nomination of sites that are of outstanding universal value to people of African descent. The United States Department of State is exploring this initiative with the Department of the Interior, its partner on world heritage matters;

(d) The Forum on Minority Issues of the Human Rights Council could use its 2011 meeting to bring together academics and journalists to discuss the challenges facing people of African descent;

(e) Special attention should be paid to people of African descent on the various days that have been previously established, such as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March) and the International Day for Tolerance (16 November);

(f) The role of Goodwill Ambassador for the permanent memorial at the United Nations to honour the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade could be highlighted through a side event or briefing at the United Nations General Assembly or Human Rights Council;

(g) The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights hosted side events on people of African descent during the Human Rights Council in 2011 highlighting the contributions of selected persons of African descent to promoting and protecting human rights around the world.

28. In addition, the United States encourages other countries, in order to ensure more effective implementation of their human rights treaty obligations and commitments, to undertake initiatives at the domestic level to combat racial discrimination. Comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation is fundamental in the fight against racial discrimination and intolerance and we encourage States to:

(a) Review existing national laws to ensure that protections against racial discrimination comply with their obligations under international human rights law;

(b) Take effective measures to ensure equal access to governmental programmes or activities, irrespective of an individual's race;

(c) Take effective measures to ensure that Government officials in the conduct of their public duties do not discriminate based on an individual's race;

(d) Take effective measures to ensure that members of racial minority groups have equal access to housing, education and employment;

(e) Encourage representation and meaningful participation of individuals, irrespective of their race, in all sectors of society, especially in Government;

(f) Undertake strong efforts to combat racial profiling, which is understood to be the invidious use of race, religion or ethnicity as a criterion in conducting stops, searches and other law enforcement investigative procedures.

IV. Views and recommendations received from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

29. Within the framework of the United Nations human rights system, the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent is the central mechanism for the advancement of the rights of people of African descent. OHCHR therefore devotes considerable effort to using this mechanism to effectively implement its mandate as one of the best ways to promote real and positive change in the lives of people of African descent. Consistent with this approach, OHCHR will be carrying out the following activities to contribute to the success of the International Year for People of African Descent:

(a) OHCHR will be organizing and servicing the tenth annual session of the Working Group, which will have the International Year as its central theme. The session will take place in Geneva from 28 March to 1 April 2011, with the participation of Member States, United Nations specialized agencies and accredited representatives from civil society;

(b) OHCHR will be organizing and facilitating a country visit by the Working Group to examine the situation of people of African descent in that country;

(c) OHCHR will be organizing and facilitating a mission by the Working Group to meet with representatives of international financial institutions to promote engagement in the International Year and commitments to activities carried out in that context;

(d) OHCHR will be publishing a fact sheet containing a compilation of the conclusions and recommendations of the Working Group from all of its sessions. This publication will serve to inform all stakeholders of the outcomes of the discussions held during the sessions of the Working Group;

(e) Throughout the year, OHCHR will be organizing side events during the sessions of the Human Rights Council that will be focused on different issues relating to people of African descent;

(f) Throughout the year, OHCHR will be releasing statements and opinion pieces by the High Commissioner for Human Rights in order to raise awareness of the International Year and of the issues relevant to people of African descent;

(g) OHCHR will commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March) with an activity focused on people of African descent;

(h) OHCHR will also be implementing other activities in the context of the International Year that will be determined at a later date during the Office's planning process for 2011.

V. Views and recommendations received from the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

30. In 2011, the International Year for People of African Descent, the Committee is planning to hold a thematic discussion on discrimination against people of African descent, with the participation of relevant United Nations bodies, programmes and specialized agencies. Human rights experts and members of civil society involved in the elimination of discrimination against people of African descent at the national and international levels will also be invited to attend as speakers.

31. The Committee would like to support measures to strengthen collaboration among the relevant organs, offices and mechanisms dealing with the question of racial discrimination, including discrimination targeting people of African descent. In this respect, the Committee would like to highlight cooperation between the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent and the Committee, with a view to institutionalizing mechanisms for mutual sharing of best practices. In this regard, two Committee members were able to participate in the ninth session of the Working Group, held in April 2010, through presentations and panel discussions.

32. With reference to General Assembly resolutions 62/122, 63/5 and 64/15 on the permanent memorial to and remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, the Committee supports the creation of a monument honouring the victims of the transatlantic slave trade. It also supports other appropriate measures to raise awareness of the International Year.

33. The Committee would like to encourage OHCHR to compile a fact sheet similar to fact sheet No. 9, on the rights of indigenous peoples, or No. 18, on minority rights, which would highlight, inter alia, the history of people of African descent, existing mechanisms for the promotion and protection of their rights, and the way ahead.

34. The Committee would also like to encourage OHCHR to develop educational and promotional material based on the aforementioned fact sheet and to make optimal use of its regional and country offices to hold regional seminars around the world. The Committee supports the engagement of OHCHR as a leading force behind the launch of an awareness-raising campaign in celebration of the International Year.

35. Finally, it should be noted that this is a preliminary contribution by the Committee and that it will engage in further discussions with a view to providing additional substantive contributions during its upcoming seventy-seventh session, in August 2010.

VI. Views and recommendations received from the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

36. In order to foster synergies, coordination and cooperation among the various mechanisms in place to address the question of racial discrimination, including discrimination targeting people of African descent, the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance suggests that the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent include, at its tenth session, discussions with representatives of United Nations human rights mechanisms, such as members of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Independent Expert on minority issues and the Special Rapporteur.

37. The Special Rapporteur also suggests that representatives of regional human rights mechanisms be invited to take part in the tenth session of the Working Group. Such regional human rights mechanisms may include the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance.

38. These discussions would help to identify issues of concern faced by people of African descent in various parts of the world and, above all, would facilitate the exchange of best practices among these various human rights mechanisms. Best practices could cover national, regional and international initiatives, as well as laws and policies to protect the rights of all individuals affected by racism, including people of African descent. National and regional jurisprudence may also be presented and discussed within this context.

39. Finally, the Special Rapporteur recalls that while people of African descent have been formally recognized as victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the Durban outcome document, in paragraph 17 of that document, it is acknowledged that "all victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance should receive the same necessary attention and protection and accordingly appropriate treatment". Therefore, no hierarchy of victims should be established and the situation of people of African descent should be discussed from the wider perspective of racial discrimination against all individuals and groups of individuals, including people of African descent. Governments need to ensure that measures and policies designed to fight racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance also address the situation of people of African descent and that related mechanisms are accessible to them.

VII. Views and recommendations received from the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent

40. The Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent submitted a series of organizational and substantive proposals related to the International Year of People of African Descent, under the theme "People of African descent: recognition, justice and development".

41. The Working Group's organizational proposals are the following:

(a) That the International Year have the theme "People of African descent: recognition, justice and development" in order to draw attention to the critical thematic focus of the International Year;

(b) That the International Year be observed with the full involvement of all relevant United Nations bodies, programmes and specialized agencies, in particular UNESCO, the International Labour Organization, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund;

(c) That cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations be ensured in the context of the observance of the International Year at the regional level;

(d) That the relevant United Nations authority establish a voluntary fund, which would include an initial contribution from the United Nations regular budget, for the International Year and invite Member States and all relevant donors to make contributions so as to provide additional funding for activities related to the International Year, as well as follow-up activities, and to facilitate the participation of non-governmental organizations addressing issues related to people of African descent in such activities;

(e) That the Secretary-General appoint the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights as coordinator of activities related to the International Year;

(f) That OHCHR ensure adequate media coverage of the International Year, including through a logo, posters, brochures and the establishment of a dedicated web space for the International Year;

(g) That a link be formally established between the International Year and the tenth anniversary of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action;

(h) That national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights be invited, through the International Coordinating Committees of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, to actively participate in the International Year, including by initiating relevant activities at the national level; and

(i) That the International Year be launched with an opening-day ceremony, to be held on 10 December 2010 during the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

42. The Working Group's substantive proposals are the following:

(a) That the International Year be formally observed at the high-level segment of the sixteenth session of the Human Rights Council in a panel discussion;

(b) That an international day for people of African descent be declared after broad-based consultations with people of African descent; but that the date chosen be connected with an important date in Haitian history, in recognition of Haiti's key role in exposing discrimination against people of African descent and focusing on the concepts of human dignity and the right to freedom and justice for people of

African descent at the local, regional and global levels from 1791 to 1804 and beyond;

(c) That the Human Rights Council be invited to launch the process of formulating a declaration on people of African descent and give the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent a mandate to develop a draft text in this respect;

(d) That a high-level international conference on people of African descent be organized under the auspices of the General Assembly on the theme "People of African descent: recognition, justice and development", with the participation of Member States and all relevant specialized agencies, human rights treaty bodies, special procedure mandate holders and other stakeholders;

(e) That regional conferences be held in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and North America on topics related to the situation of people of African descent;

(f) That OHCHR organize side events on the situation of people of African descent during the regular sessions of the Human Rights Council in 2011;

(g) That a publication on the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, including a compilation of its recommendations, be produced as part of the OHCHR fact sheet series;

(h) That the participation of the maximum number of civil society representatives in activities organized for the International Year be encouraged and that an international network be created to facilitate exchanges of information among non-governmental organizations representing people of African descent;

(i) That arrival-point sites of memory be established in all countries to which Africans were relocated and which benefited from the transatlantic trade in Africans;

(j) That Governments be encouraged to include in their education activities awareness-raising events relating to the observance of the International Year, including through art competitions, cultural events, awards, academic events and films and documentaries, with a view to restoring the dignity of people of African descent;

(k) That Member States, United Nations agencies and regional organizations foster cultural links between the African diaspora and the African continent.

VIII. Views and recommendations received from other relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes

43. The following contribution was received from the Department of Public Information:

(a) General suggestions:

(i) Exhibitions: a mobile exhibition, displayed at Headquarters and other duty stations around the world, depicting the history and culture (music, food, religion) of people of African descent;

(ii) Website: a dedicated United Nations website with information on the cultural history and current situation of people of African descent;

(iii) Social media: a Facebook page and Twitter page for interactive communications;

(iv) Printed material: a poster commemorating the International Year and information products, such as brochures, pamphlets, etc.;

(v) Audio-visual: United Nations radio programmes and podcasts on the history and culture (music, food, religion) of people of African descent;

(vi) Video: a short documentary or B-roll on the history of people of African descent;

(b) Specific suggestions:

(i) Cultural event: a cultural event featuring local performance artists at Headquarters with a theme that highlights the presence of African descendants and culture across the globe;

(ii) Fair: the United Nations could also host a food and craft fair and invite appropriate Member States and local craftspeople and restaurants to participate, and organize a film or film series focused on the human and civil rights struggles of African descendants. The United Nations could also draw on the expertise of the New York African Film Festival for sponsorship or suggestions.

44. In this context, the Department of Public Information wishes to emphasize that the suggested activities could not be undertaken within existing resources.

45. In addition, the Department of Public Information sees an option for conducting the activities planned for 2011 in connection with the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade (General Assembly resolution 62/122) as part of the activities for the International Year.

46. The theme for the 2011 commemorations will be determined by the Commemoration Steering Committee. The Steering Committee is composed of the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, other senior staff of the Department of Public Information and representatives of the Caribbean Community and the African Group.

47. In 2010, the theme of the International Day was "Expressing our freedom through culture". This theme highlighted the importance of cultural heritage, passed down from generation to generation, as a medium for expressing and nurturing identity during the days of slavery and ultimately for celebrating freedom from slavery after 400 years of struggle.

48. During the week-long series of commemorative events, the Department organized a number of activities to raise awareness of the International Day. The 2010 programme consisted of the following events and activities:

- Afro-Caribbean music and food fair
- Film screening of *Slave Routes: Resistance, Abolition and Creative Progress*
- Exhibit under the theme "400 Years of Struggle: for freedom and culture"

- Non-governmental organizations briefing at Headquarters, including a panel discussion on the impact of cultural expression as a means of resistance to the transatlantic slave trade
- Special commemorative meeting of the General Assembly
- Press conference
- Student videoconference organized by the Department of Public Information in collaboration with UNESCO

49. A similar programme would be created for 2011.

IX. Draft programme of activities for the International Year for People of African Descent

50. Having considered the views and recommendations contained in the responses to the request for input on possible activities to mark the International Year for People of African Descent and mindful that United Nations agencies are encouraged by the General Assembly to carry out activities within existing resources, the following is a draft programme of activities for the International Year:[1]

A. Preliminary organizational issues

Theme of the International Year

51. The International Year should have the theme "People of African descent: recognition, justice and development" in order to draw attention to the critical thematic focus of the International Year.

Logo for the International Year

52. A logo should be created and used for all activities related to the International Year.

Establishment of a fund for the International Year

53. A voluntary fund, including an initial contribution from the United Nations regular budget, should be established for the International Year and Member States and all relevant donors should be invited to make contributions so as to provide additional funding for activities related to the International Year, as well as follow-up activities and to facilitate the participation of non-governmental organizations dealing with issues of people of African descent in such activities.

[1] The authors of the various proposals may be identified in sections III to XIII of the present report.

B. Activities

Opening ceremony

54. The International Year should be launched with an opening-day ceremony, to be held on 10 December 2010 during the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

Slave Route Project

55. In order to portray the actual economic, social and political situation of peoples of African descent and stimulate debate on discriminatory patterns inherited from slavery, a publication should be launched on the topic, either as an extension of the Slave Route Project or through the creation of a group of experts. Other related activities may include the preparation and publication of maps, educational materials, films, public exhibitions and other initiatives under the Slave Route Project.

World Conference on People of African Descent

56. A world conference on people of African descent should be held to discuss their historic contribution to the creation of new societies in the places to which they were forcibly brought, and how their contribution is represented in different areas, such as politics, the labour market and the media. This conference should occur in parallel with an arts festival comprising dance and music performances, theatre, films and art exhibits, which would increase the visibility of this initiative.

International conference on people of African descent

57. A high-level international conference on people of African descent should be organized under the auspices of the General Assembly on the theme "People of African descent: recognition, justice and development", with the participation of Member States and all relevant specialized agencies, human rights treaty bodies, special procedure mandate holders and other stakeholders.

Regional conferences on people of African descent

58. Regional conferences should be held in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and North America on topics related to the situation of people of African descent.

Dissemination activities by States

59. Member States are encouraged to undertake the following awareness-raising activities:

(a) A comprehensive, national-level campaign involving mass media, forums, seminars and presentations on the International Year;

(b) Awareness-raising days focusing on social, economic and cultural issues related to people of African descent should be organized by universities, Government institutions and non-governmental organizations, with the assistance of experts on the subject matter.

Educational activities by States

60. States are encouraged to include in their education activities awareness-raising events relating to the observance of the International Year, including through art competitions, cultural events, awards, academic events and films and documentaries, with a view to restoring the dignity of people of African descent.

61. States are encouraged to create a study-grant programme for children and young people of African descent in order to guarantee their effective access to primary and secondary education.

Training for people of African descent

62. States should carry out education and training initiatives for social organizations and civil society to raise awareness of international instruments related to racism and racial discrimination.

Cultural exchanges

63. States should facilitate exchanges among leaders and sharing of leadership experiences between organizations of African descent at the regional and international levels.

International civil society network

64. An international network should be created to facilitate exchanges of information among non-governmental organizations representing people of African descent.

Publications on people of African descent

65. OHCHR should produce a publication on the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, including a compilation of its recommendations, as part of the OHCHR fact sheet series.

UNESCO conferences and forums

66. The conference being organized by UNESCO and Purdue University in April 2011 on philosophical dialogue between Africa and the Americas should be used to commemorate the International Year.

67. The theme of the 2011 UNESCO Youth Forum, held prior to the UNESCO General Conference, should be linked to the International Year.

UNESCO World Heritage programme

68. The UNESCO World Heritage programme should explore the possibility of a transboundary nomination of sites that are of outstanding universal value to people of African descent.

Forum on Minority Issues

69. The Forum on Minority Issues of the Human Rights Council should use its 2011 meeting to bring together academics and journalists to discuss the challenges facing people of African descent.

Goodwill Ambassador

70. The role of Goodwill Ambassador for the permanent memorial at the United Nations to honour the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade should be highlighted through a side event or briefing during the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly or at a session of the Human Rights Council.

Statements and opinion pieces relevant to the International Year

71. Throughout the course of the year, the High Commissioner for Human Rights should release statements and opinion pieces in order to raise awareness of the International Year and of the issues relevant to people of African descent.

International commemorative days

72. The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March) and the International Day for Tolerance (16 November) should be commemorated in the United Nations with activities focused on people of African descent. The Commemoration Steering Committee for the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade should be requested to connect the 2011 commemoration to the International Year and carry out activities that reflect that connection.

Exhibition at United Nations offices

73. A mobile exhibition should be displayed at Headquarters and other duty stations around the world depicting the history and culture (music, food, religion) of people of African descent.

Audio-visual information on the International Year

74. United Nations Radio should broadcast programmes and podcasts on the history and culture (music, food, religion) of people of African descent.

Cultural event at United Nations Headquarters

75. A cultural event featuring local performance artists should be held at Headquarters with a theme that highlights the presence of African descendants and culture across the globe.

Cuisine and craft fair at United Nations Headquarters

76. A cuisine and craft fair should be held at Headquarters, with appropriate Member States and local craftspeople and restaurants invited to participate.

Film series on people of African descent

77. The New York African Film Festival should be invited to collaborate on presenting a film series focused on the human and civil rights struggles of people of African descent.

Tenth session of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent

78. The tenth annual session of the Working Group should have the International Year for People of African Descent as its central theme. In order to foster synergies,

coordination and cooperation among the various mechanisms in place to address the question of racial discrimination, including discrimination targeting people of African descent, the Working Group should include, at its tenth session, discussions with representatives of United Nations human rights mechanisms, such as members of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Independent Expert on minority issues and the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Representatives of regional human rights mechanisms should also be invited to take part in the tenth session of the Working Group. Such regional human rights mechanisms may include the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance.

Other activities of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent

79. The Working Group should conduct a mission to meet with representatives of international financial institutions to promote engagement in the International Year and commitments to activities carried out in that context.

Sessions of the Human Rights Council

80. The International Year for People of African Descent should be formally observed at the high-level segment of the sixteenth session of the Human Rights Council in a panel discussion.

81. OHCHR should organize side events on the situation of people of African descent during the regular sessions of the Human Rights Council in 2011.

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

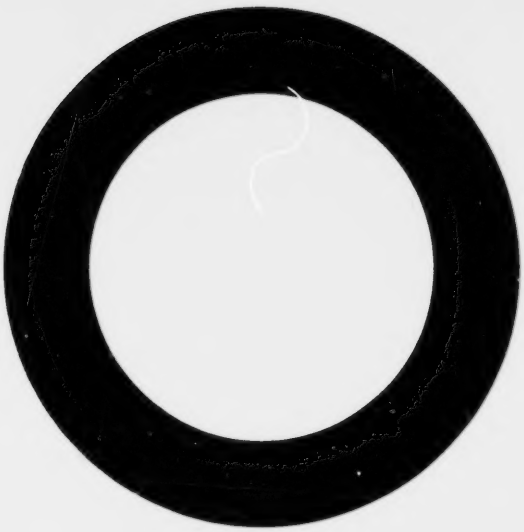
82. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is encouraged to hold a thematic discussion on discrimination against people of African descent, with the participation of relevant United Nations bodies, programmes and specialized agencies.

International day for people of African descent

83. An International day for people of African descent should be declared after broad-based consultations with people of African descent; but the date chosen should be connected with an important date in Haitian history, in recognition of Haiti's fundamental role in exposing discrimination against people of African descent and focusing on the concepts of human dignity and the right to freedom and justice for people of African descent at the local, regional and global levels from 1791 to 1804 and beyond.

Arrival-point sites of memory

84. Arrival-point sites of memory should be established in all countries to which Africans were relocated and which benefited from the transatlantic trade in Africans.



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Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session

Work of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters held its fifty-third and fifty-fourth sessions, respectively, in New York from 24 to 26 February 2010 and in Geneva from 7 to 9 July 2010. The Board focused its deliberations during its sessions on the following substantive agenda items: (a) conceptual issues leading up to the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and (b) follow-up action on the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education.

The first agenda item was discussed by the Board at its fifty-second session in July 2009 and a set of recommendations were provided to the Secretary-General. The Board, however, felt strongly that it was important to continue providing the Secretary-General with a new set of recommendations prior to the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to be held in May 2010.

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Consequently, the Board continued its deliberations on the item entitled "Conceptual issues leading up to the 2010 NPT Review Conference" during its fifty-third session in New York. The Board recommended that the Secretary-General continue to provide his strong support for the political momentum in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation leading up to the Review Conference, and encourage States to ensure high-level political commitment to, and participation at, the Review Conference. It also urged the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to send positive messages prior to the Review Conference and encourage States to propose concrete steps for a multilateral process in nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy and for implementation of existing norms. The Board also urged the Secretary-General to stress to both nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States their common responsibility in having zero tolerance for proliferation by either States or non-State actors, as well as in advancing nuclear disarmament. It was also felt that the Secretary-General should acknowledge the progress already achieved, especially in the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and in States reversing their nuclear status. At its fifty-fourth session in Geneva, the Board took time to exchange views on the outcome of the 2010 Review Conference.

Regarding the second agenda item on the follow-up action on the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education, the Board had an in-depth exchange of views on the issue during both its sessions. The Board recommended that the Secretary-General remind States to fully implement the recommendations made in the 2002 United Nations study and call the attention of relevant international and regional organizations to the importance of disarmament and non-proliferation education. The Board encouraged the Secretary-General to continue his advocacy role in promoting the importance of disarmament and non-proliferation education whenever possible. The Board also felt that the Secretary-General should encourage Governments to establish robust infrastructures to handle disarmament and non-proliferation studies and to regularly submit reports in connection with disarmament education.

As the Board of Trustees for the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, the Board adopted the Institute's 2010 programme and budget and approved, for submission to the General Assembly, the report of the Director of the Institute on its activities from August 2009 to July 2010, as well as the proposed programme of work and budget for 2010 and 2011. The Board also urged the Secretary-General to use all the influence at his disposal to secure the increase of the subvention in the regular budget of the United Nations for the Institute to fully fund all core staff costs.

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters held its fifty-third and fifty-fourth sessions, respectively, in New York from 24 to 26 February 2010 and in Geneva from 7 to 9 July 2010. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 38/183 O. The report of the Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), approved by the Advisory Board serving as its Board of Trustees, has been submitted in a separate document (A/65/177).

2. Carlo Trezza of Italy chaired the two sessions of the Board in 2010.

3. The present report summarizes the Board's deliberations during the two sessions and the specific recommendations it conveyed to the Secretary-General.

II. Substantive discussions and recommendations

A. Conceptual issues leading up to the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

4. The Board had already discussed the agenda item at its fifty-second session in July 2009 and a set of recommendations were presented to the Secretary-General. Nonetheless, the Board had agreed to continue its consideration of the agenda item at its next session, due to continuing developments in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Furthermore, the Board had felt strongly that it was important to provide the Secretary-General with a new set of recommendations prior to the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons scheduled to be held in May 2010.

5. Three Board members, Donald Mahley, H. M. G. S. Palihakkara and François Rivasseau, presented food-for-thought papers on the agenda item at the fifty-third session.

6. The Board expressed appreciation and support for the active engagement and leadership of the Secretary-General on disarmament matters. There were again strong expressions of support for the Secretary-General's five-point plan on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of October 2008, and his subsequent proposals, as well as for the need for the Secretary-General to maintain the momentum of his engagement.

7. A strong message by the Secretary-General on the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was considered to be of vital political importance with a positive effect on the non-proliferation and disarmament agenda. It was also suggested that the Secretary-General do all within his powers to assist in maintaining the political momentum for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament already under way aiming at a nuclear-weapon-free world.

8. Although the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was seen as the activity of its States parties, the Board commented that the United Nations could capitalize on its institutional recognition by taking the lead on some issues. Views were expressed that the success or failure of the Review Conference would have a broader impact on the international system beyond the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons regime and would affect the very idea of

international governance and multilateralism. Several members also stressed that progress should be made on all three pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and that it was also crucial to maintain equilibrium between them.

9. Some members expressed concerns about nuclear proliferation and the reaffirmation of nuclear deterrence doctrines in some parts of the world, as well as disappointment at the slow pace in nuclear disarmament. While some cases of proliferation may have a different sense of urgency for various parties, it was emphasized that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons had zero tolerance for proliferation by both State and non-State actors. Mention was made of the fact that selective responses could put into question the benefits of joining the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

10. It was also mentioned that, while disarmament did not exist in a vacuum and should occur in a security environment where stability could be achieved without armaments, neither could non-proliferation measures exist in a disarmament vacuum.

11. Comments were also made on the importance of pursuing further clarifications on doctrines on no-first-use as well as "sole purpose". In this connection, some members mentioned that the concept of negative security assurances should be strengthened.

12. The importance of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy was stressed by a number of Board members. Also stated was the need for improving nuclear technology for peaceful applications and proliferation resistant technologies, without danger of clandestine nuclear programmes. It was stated, however, that such technologies would require robust international cooperation as well as the development of special safeguards systems. The necessity of adapting the non-proliferation regime to changing realities was also expressed.

13. Several members reiterated the need to strongly encourage the United States of America and the Russian Federation to conclude an agreement on a follow-up to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START). Views were expressed that further reductions in those nuclear arsenals could open the way to wider commitments.

Recommendations

14. **The Board made the following recommendations which were presented to the Secretary-General before the 2010 Review Conference:**

(a) **The Secretary-General should continue to provide his strong support for the political momentum in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation leading up to the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;**

(b) **The Secretary-General should encourage States to ensure high-level political commitment to, as well as participation at, the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;**

(c) **The Secretary-General should continue his efforts to send positive messages prior to the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and encourage States to propose concrete**

steps for multilateral process in nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy and for implementation of existing norms;

(d) The Secretary-General should stress to both nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States their common responsibility in having zero tolerance for proliferation by either States or non-State actors, as well as in advancing nuclear disarmament;

(e) The Secretary-General should acknowledge the progress already achieved, especially in the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and in States reversing their nuclear status. He should also reaffirm the relevance of disarmament education in the context of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

B. Follow-up action on the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education

15. For its second agenda item, the Board exchanged views on the follow-up action on the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education during both its sessions. In particular, recommendation 30 of the 2002 United Nations study (A/57/124) read: "in the context of its current mandate, the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters is encouraged to consider periodically follow-up action related to disarmament and non-proliferation education". Since it had already been eight years since the study was published, it was deemed timely for the Board to deliberate on the topic, especially given the rising interest of civil society concerning disarmament and non-proliferation matters, particularly nuclear disarmament.

16. At its fifty-third session, a food-for-thought paper on the topic was presented by Board member Kate Dewes. At the same meeting, the Board also heard a presentation by an expert, William Potter, Sam Nunn and Richard Lugar Professor of Nonproliferation Studies and Director of the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Monterey Institute for International Studies, on the issue of disarmament education.

17. The Board had an in-depth exchange of views on the agenda item. It was suggested that the Secretary-General use all opportunities, especially at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to promote and stress the importance of disarmament education.

18. Some members pointed out, however, that disarmament and non-proliferation issues were not a priority in many parts of the world and that there were difficulties in generating public interest. In particular, views were expressed that disarmament and non-proliferation issues were broad and that interest in the issues differed considerably among States and that, therefore, disarmament education did not have the same conceptions everywhere.

19. Many members stressed the need for stronger efforts on the part of Governments to train and educate not only Government officials in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation but also to raise the awareness of parliamentarians, educators, scientists, researchers and the military to disarmament issues on which their respective fields could have a significant impact. Several

Board members also underlined the necessity of military education to include components of disarmament education.

20. In connection with the uses of technology, opinions were expressed on the various modern communication tools that could be used to enhance disarmament education, such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, and disarmament-related documentaries/films and games. Some members reiterated the need to enlist the help of celebrities in raising public awareness of the issues.

21. Other noteworthy suggestions included the need to involve other international agencies, notably the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in order to reach the youth on disarmament education, the importance of enhancing networking as a way to improving and promoting disarmament education, and the appointment of a messenger of peace for disarmament education. It was also widely suggested that the issue of disarmament education be raised at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

22. The Board continued its deliberations on the follow-up action on the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education at its fifty-fourth session. The Board was thus able to have a second round of in-depth discussions on the subject. At the same session, a food-for-thought paper was presented by Board member Monica Herz.

23. The Board expressed satisfaction at the inclusion, for the first time in action 22 in the conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions of the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, of consensus language encouraging all States to implement the recommendations contained in the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education, in order to advance the goals of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in support of achieving a world without nuclear weapons.

24. Many members reiterated that disarmament and non-proliferation education presently attracted little interest and thus needed to be packaged in a way that would generate interest in more countries. It was also stressed that the focus of disarmament and non-proliferation education should encompass both weapons of mass destruction and conventional disarmament issues in order to generate interest as well as raise public awareness of the issues. The importance of connecting disarmament education with the needs of the local environment and with the broader issue of violence and arms control was also emphasized.

25. The need to update disarmament education and the way in which it is disseminated, particularly through the use of new technologies, was again stressed. In particular, the need to educate a younger audience, including those in the secondary school, was also mentioned. It was suggested that new technologies, including non-violent video games, could serve as useful tools for disarmament education and stigmatize violence, with a "bottom-up" approach.

26. The Board discussed the question of which other audiences to target, such as the industrial community and military establishments, in addition to schools, academia and media organizations. An important audience mentioned was parliamentarians, particularly in view of the fact that they were the ones that would ratify any disarmament agreements. A suggestion was made for a letter to be sent by

the Secretary-General to Governments encouraging them to implement the recommendations of the 2002 United Nations study. In the case of members of the military, it was stated that focus should be put on providing them with education on humanitarian law aspects, as well as disarmament and non-proliferation.

27. The media was seen as an important vehicle for disarmament education. Instruction techniques were also meaningful and varied: media, Internet, comic books, available in various languages. The translation and accessibility of mediums to instruction were considered a key aspect of disarmament education.

28. It was mentioned that UNIDIR could play a major role. However, the need to find a common and acceptable language was emphasized. It was suggested that a UNIDIR lexicon be made available in all official United Nations languages, in order to promote a common understanding and that it be updated and printed or posted on the Institute's website.

29. UNESCO and its national commissions, were also considered to be very useful in the dissemination of information on disarmament education. It was also suggested that resources, including books, could be prepared and made available by UNESCO to universities around the world in order to create a common language regarding disarmament. Other United Nations agencies and international organizations, such as the United Nations Children's Fund, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and the World Health Organization, as well as regional organizations, could also be encouraged to develop their capacities to disseminate disarmament education.

30. It was also proposed that working together with the ministries of education, as well as the presidents of universities, in various countries could help to create disarmament education programmes in the curricula of schools in their respective countries.

31. The importance for Governments to establish robust structures to handle disarmament and non-proliferation issues, including the need to establish career paths for individuals who have focused on disarmament and non-proliferation studies, was stressed. It was also mentioned that States could consider providing assistance in developing disarmament and non-proliferation education programmes.

32. The Board agreed that the 2002 United Nations study was still valid. The need for full implementation of the recommendations made in 2002, with particular reference to reporting, was emphasized, having in mind the priorities that have been devised in the report. A possible reprint of the study, with a new foreword by the Secretary-General, was also suggested.

33. The introduction of a new resolution in the First Committee on the issue of disarmament education was proposed. It was also suggested that those States which have been traditionally attached to the issue should continue their efforts to revive interest in the topic of disarmament education.

Recommendations

34. **The Board made the following recommendations:**

(a) **The Secretary-General could remind States to implement fully the recommendations made in the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament and**

non-proliferation education, and call the attention of other relevant international and regional organizations to the importance of disarmament and non-proliferation education;

(b) **The Secretary-General is encouraged to continue his advocacy role in promoting the importance of disarmament and non-proliferation education whenever possible, and to consider making a major statement on this issue at the appropriate occasion;**

(c) **The Secretary-General should encourage Governments to establish robust infrastructures to handle disarmament and non-proliferation studies and to regularly submit reports in connection with disarmament education.**

C. Exchange of views on the outcome of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

35. Although the Board had concluded its deliberations on the conceptual issues leading up to the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and provided the Secretary-General with a set of recommendations at its session in February, members felt the need to discuss the outcome of the Review Conference at its following session in July.

36. Consequently, at its fifty-fourth session, Board members exchanged opinions on the outcome of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Board member Nobuyasu Abe presented an assessment paper of the Review Conference at the session.

37. The outcome of the Review Conference was seen as the result of an overall positive review process from 2005 to 2010 within the established framework of a constructive international climate that had recently been achieved. The 2010 Review Conference was also seen as successful when compared with the 2005 Review Conference. The need to maintain the positive momentum was stressed by many Board members.

38. The Board praised the efforts of the Secretary-General prior to and during the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Members voiced strong support for the Secretary-General's continued advocacy role in promoting the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Members also appreciated the fact that the Secretary-General had mentioned the role of the Advisory Board in his inaugural statement to the Review Conference.

39. The Board mentioned that, as the voice of the international community, the Secretary-General should help to maintain the consensus attained at the Review Conference, given his unique position to appeal to all States, at the highest political level, to pay more attention to the issue of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It was suggested that the Secretary-General also act as the preserver of the spirit of the 2010 Review Conference and the bridge-builder between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States.

40. In connection with the tasks assigned to the Secretary-General in the follow-on actions in the Final Document of the Review Conference, the Board stressed his special responsibility in convening the high-level meeting in September 2010 in support of the work of the Conference on Disarmament. It was emphasized that efforts should be made to avoid confrontations. It was also suggested that the Secretary-General encourage States to preserve the delicate consensus and to implement the recommendations agreed at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

41. The Board stated that priority should also be given to the implementation of the 1995 resolution of the Review Conference on the Middle East and the convening of a conference in 2012, to be attended by all States of the Middle East, on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. Despite the difficulties and risks, an early initiation of the process was considered important.

42. The Board emphasized the key role of the Secretary-General in organizing the proposed conference and in giving legitimacy to such a complex enterprise. It was suggested that the Secretary-General could consider availing himself of a group of experts from various institutions in order to have access to independent and objective views on the issue.

43. Other significant comments expressed on the issue included the need for early ratification of the new START Treaty, the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the beginning of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty and discussions on negative-security assurances in the Conference on Disarmament. The need to strengthen transparency in the nuclear field in view of the possible role of the Secretary-General in fostering wider transparency by nuclear-weapon States, including in the area of sub-strategic weapons, was also suggested.

III. Meeting with the Secretary-General

44. The Board had a meeting with the Secretary-General on 24 February 2010, during which Board members took the opportunity to exchange views with the Secretary-General on issues related to multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation.

IV. Presentations by civil society/non-governmental organizations

45. As is customary, the Board heard presentations on issues pertaining to its agenda from representatives of non-governmental organizations during both of its sessions. On issues related to nuclear disarmament and the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, presentations were made at the fifty-third session by Ray Acheson, Project Director of Reaching Critical Will, and John Burroughs, Executive Director of the Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy.

46. At the fifty-fourth session, Beatrice Fihn, Project Associate at Reaching Critical Will, and Peter Herby, Head of the Arms Unit in the Legal Division of the International Committee of the Red Cross, briefed the Board on issues pertaining to

disarmament education and international humanitarian law and the use of nuclear weapons, respectively.

V. Board of Trustees of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

47. At its fifty-third session, the Advisory Board, sitting as the Board of Trustees, received a comprehensive briefing from both the Director and the Deputy Director on the work of the Institute since the previous session of the Board in July 2009 and on its planned activities for 2010. The Board commended the work carried out by UNIDIR, expressed support for its research activities and reiterated the importance of the Institute maintaining its independence.

48. The Board formally adopted the Institute's 2010 programme of work and budget (see A/64/261), which had been presented at the Board's fifty-second session, held in Geneva in July 2009, taking into account the comments of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions contained in its updated report on the proposed programme of work and budget for 2010-2011 (A/64/7/Add.7).

49. At the Board's fifty-fourth session, both the Director and the Deputy Director of the Institute briefed Board members on the work undertaken by UNIDIR since its previous meeting. A subcommittee on UNIDIR, consisting of five Board members, met prior to the regular session, on 6 July, to review the Institute's programme in detail.

50. After considering the draft report of the Director on the Institute's activities for the period from August 2009 to July 2010 and the programme of work and estimated budget for 2010 and 2011, the Board approved the report of the Institute for submission to the General Assembly.

51. Members of the Board expressed continued strong support for the activities of UNIDIR, particularly in view of its thirtieth anniversary. Members also considered ways to strengthen the Institute's research programmes and fund-raising activities.

52. In its capacity as the Board of Trustees, the Board urged the Secretary-General to use all the influence at his disposal to secure the increase of the subvention in the regular budget of the United Nations for UNIDIR to, at a minimum, fully fund all core staff costs, as a requisite for providing the stability needed to allow the Institute to pursue the structure and programme of work justified by its vision and mission. It also urged the Secretary-General to indicate in strong language the extraordinary value of the Institute remaining a stand-alone, autonomous research institution, thereby advancing the objective value of the role of the Secretary-General and the United Nations in pursuing a world made more safe and secure by advances in the area of disarmament.

VI. Future work

53. The Board exchanged views on a number of possible issues for discussion at its sessions in 2011, including a broad range of issues such as the general concept of nuclear-weapon-free zones, including the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and

the proposed conference in 2012, the trade and trafficking of conventional arms, the 2011 Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention, the maintenance of strategic stability, export control regimes such as the Nuclear Suppliers Group and conventional disarmament in the context of the rapidly changing environment in new technologies.

54. Possible specific topics suggested were (a) the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, in the wider context of nuclear-weapon-free zones; (b) the conventional arms trade, in particular, the arms trade treaty and the trafficking of small arms and light weapons; and (c) the 2011 Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention. The need to balance the deliberations of the Board in 2011 between issues related to conventional and nuclear or weapons of mass destruction was widely stressed.

Annex

Members of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters

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Sixty-fifth session
Item 20 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Sustainable development: implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development

Preparations for the International Year of Forests, 2011

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present update report has been prepared to provide additional information received since submission of the previous report on the state of preparations for the International Year of Forests, 2011 to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session (A/64/274). The current report provides updated information on initiatives and activities being organized to celebrate the Year. The concluding section offers recommendations on the next steps. The annexes to the report include the International Year of Forests, 2011 logo as well the logo use guidelines and waiver of liability form.

* A/65/150.

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I. Introduction

1. On 20 December 2006, the General Assembly, in its resolution 61/193, declared 2011 the International Year of Forests and invited Governments, the United Nations system, relevant non-governmental organizations, the private sector and other actors to make concerted efforts to raise awareness at all levels to strengthen the sustainable management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests for the benefit of current and future generations.

2. In resolution 61/193, the General Assembly also requested the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat to serve as the focal point for the implementation of the Year, in collaboration with Governments, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and international, regional and subregional organizations and processes as well as relevant major groups. It also encouraged voluntary partnerships among Member States, international organizations and major groups to facilitate and promote activities related to the Year at the local and national levels, including by creating national committees or designating focal points in their respective countries.

3. The present report provides information on the preparations at the national, regional and international levels for the observance of the Year, taking into account input received in response to notes verbales dated 10 July 2009 and 9 April 2010. A number of Member States and organizations have indicated their intention to promote activities to celebrate the International Year of Forests, 2011; however, at the time of drafting of this report, specific details for those activities were still under development.

II. Key activities

4. The International Year of Forests, 2011 offers a unique opportunity to raise public awareness of the challenges facing many of the world's forests and the people who depend on them. Great success stories and valuable lessons on how to promote sustainable forest management already exist. The Year provides a means of bringing those voices together and building momentum towards greater public participation in forest activities around the world. To help facilitate achievement of the objectives of the Year, the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests is undertaking the following communication activities:

(a) The International Year of Forests, 2011 logo: The official logo for the International Year has been developed in collaboration with the Graphics Design Unit of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat. The logo received approval by the United Nations Publications Board on 9 July 2010 and was launched in all official United Nations languages on 19 July 2010. The secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests announced the logo to Member States, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and regional and subregional entities as well as major groups. Annex I to this report contains the logo in all official United Nations languages, annex II sets forth the logo use guidelines, and annex III contains the waiver of liability form.

(i) The International Year of Forests, 2011 logo is designed to convey the theme of "Forests for People" celebrating the central role of people in the sustainable management, conservation and sustainable development of our

world's forests. The iconographic elements in the design depict some of the multiple values of forests and the need for a 360-degree perspective: forests provide shelter to people and habitat to biodiversity; are a source of food, medicine and clean water; and play a vital role in maintaining a stable global climate and environment. All of these elements taken together reinforce the message that forests are vital to the survival and well-being of people everywhere, all 7 billion of us.

(ii) The International Year of Forests, 2011 logo is available in the six official United Nations languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Member States are encouraged to translate the text "International Year of Forests, 2011" into local languages and send the translated text only in EPS (graphic) file format to the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat so that the logo can be made available in local languages.

(b) The International Year of Forests, 2011 website: The website is being developed by the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests to provide an online platform for all information materials related to the celebration of the Year. This multimedia site will feature interactive web tools to elicit feedback and dialogue, and include key components such as a calendar of national, regional and international initiatives related to the Year and electronic versions of all International Year promotional materials, including photographs, videos and audio and PowerPoint presentations. The website will include a portal geared towards the media, which will feature links to forest news items and a press kit with fact sheets, brochures and other informational documents related to critical forest issues. It will also function as a gateway to all International Year of Forests, 2011 websites of Member States.

(c) Official launch of the Year: The launch will take place at United Nations Headquarters during the high-level segment of the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (2 and 3 February 2011), in which Heads of State and Ministers are expected to participate. The programme will include high-level panel discussions, media activities, film screenings, the issuance of the United Nations commemorative stamp series for the International Year, and other public events currently under consideration. In the note verbale of 9 April 2010, Member States from all regional groups were invited to participate at the ministerial level in the international launch events at the ninth session of the Forum. Member States were also invited to use these events as an opportunity to announce national actions in implementing the International Year of Forests, 2011.

(d) The International Year of Forests, 2011 communication strategy: The secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests is working with an advisory committee of media professionals who are supporting the secretariat's development and implementation of the communication strategy of the Year. The secretariat has been reaching out to organizations in the film, television and media industries, nature museums and other institutions that have an interest in forests.

(e) Forest spokespersons or messengers: The secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests is currently identifying individuals who can use their leadership or celebrity status to generate media attention and help to raise awareness and support for forests. These ambassadors-at-large are being sought from around the world and would be invited to travel to public events to promote the International Year of Forests, 2011 and mobilize action for forests.

(f) The International Year of Forests, 2011 United Nations stamp series: The United Nations Postal Administration is developing a United Nations commemorative stamp series for the International Year in collaboration with the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat. The stamp series is expected to be launched during the official launch of the International Year of Forests at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The stamp series will also be issued at the United Nations Offices at Geneva and Vienna.

(g) Art, film and photo competitions: The secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests plans to organize virtual (online) events to recognize individuals who use art, photography, film and short videos to communicate their views and celebrate forests for people. The secretariat is currently working with museums, environmental filmmakers, media representatives and the forest networks to develop a major worldwide competition to attract art, film and photographs that capture the "Forests for People" theme of the International Year of Forests, 2011.

(h) Public service announcements and short promotional films: The United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat plans to produce 3 to 5 minute films and public service announcements for distribution worldwide in different languages for use on television and other innovative distribution channels, including pro bono shows in theatres to convey inspiring messages of action for forests.

(i) Exhibits and banners: Using the stories, art and photos collected as part of the International Year of Forests, 2011 activities, the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat plans to create exhibits and banner displays which would feature vignettes of people's actions for sustainable forest management around the world and embodying the theme of "Forests in Your Everyday Life".

(j) The International Year of Forests, 2011 Film Festival: Working with well-established environmental film festivals, the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat will promote film screenings focused on the International Year theme of "Forests for People". This would include screenings at United Nations facilities and various locations.

(k) Forest biodiversity: The United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat is working in close collaboration with the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity to explore areas of synergy between the International Year of Biodiversity in 2010 and the International Year of Forests. Activities include, inter alia, the organization of a "bridging event" as part of the closing ceremony of the International Year of Biodiversity in December 2010 in Kanazawa, Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan, and development of informational materials on forest biodiversity that will showcase the deep interlinkages between forests and biodiversity. Other communication activities are under discussion to build on the successes of the International Year of Biodiversity in 2010, and to carry the momentum forward into the International Year of Forests in 2011.

(l) Wetlands and forests: The Ramsar Convention selected "Wetlands and Forests" as the theme for World Wetlands Day, 2011 in recognition of the International Year of Forests. The United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat is currently working in collaboration with the Ramsar Convention secretariat on the production of a World Wetlands Day, 2011 leaflet on wetlands and forests.

III. National and regional events

5. While the Year will be a global event, a large number of activities to celebrate the International Year will take place at the national and regional levels. National committees and International Year of Forests focal points have the responsibility for coordinating and publicizing country-level celebrations and communicating these plans and results to the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat.

Meetings/conferences/ceremonies

6. The Secretariat has been notified of the following meetings, conferences and ceremonies to celebrate the International Year of Forests, 2011:

- Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) plans to convene the Second Forest Ministerial Meeting for ASEAN and China in 2011 as well as a senior forest official meeting for ASEAN and China on regional policy dialogue
- Brazil plans to organize an International Congress on Cities and Forests in Manaus, Amazonas, in 2011
- Bulgaria plans to celebrate the traditional professional holiday of foresters in April 2011
- The Communauté des Etats Sahélo-Sahariens is planning meetings in 2011 on combating desertification and safeguarding forest resources, including the first meeting of the steering committee of the Great Green Wall Initiative
- The Czech Republic will celebrate Forest Days in 2011
- Cyprus is organizing a meeting on "COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) Action FP0701, Post-Fire Forest Management in Southern Europe" in 2011 and a conference on the holistic management of forest ecosystems in Cyprus
- El Salvador plans to hold a forestry fair in 2011 with a focus on development
- ENO (Environment Online), a global virtual school and network for sustainable development in Finland, plans to organize a global forest conference for children in September 2011 in Joensuu, Finland
- Ethiopia is planning an International Year of Forests launch event with participation of government and non-governmental stakeholders, including research and higher education institutions
- The European Union Forest Directors-General meeting is expected to be held in Poland in November 2011
- The European State Forest Association (EUSTAFOR) plans to organize its twelfth meeting in 2011
- Germany's Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection plans to launch a national awareness campaign to create publicity and awareness for the Year and forest-related issues during the International Green Week in Berlin (21-30 January 2011)
- Guatemala plans to organize its ninth National Forestry Congress in 2011

- Japan is organizing a ceremony to bridge the closing of the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity to the 2011 International Year of Forests. The ceremony will be organized as part of the closing event of the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity in Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan, in December 2010. Japan also intends to organize an international conference in February or March 2011 which will mark the launch of the International Year of Forests in Japan

- The tenth Pacific Heads of Forestry meeting will be held in 2011, to review past and present implementation of forestry activities in the Pacific

- Poland will launch the International Year of Forests in Poland in conjunction with a seminar on "Polish Forests and Forestry against the Background of Forests in Europe and the World", with participation of experts from the scientific community and a media press conference. The key message of the event will be that while forests are decreasing globally, they are increasing in Europe and Poland because of sustainable management

- The Republic of Korea will host a commemorative ceremony for the International Year of Forests which will feature forestry achievement awards, unveiling of a merit tower in commemoration of the Year, and relevant campaigns. The Republic of Korea will also organize an international symposium on forest roles, and policies of climate change and forestry as well as workshops, seminars, conferences and panel discussions to highlight the multiple roles of forests for society

- The Sixth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe will be convened in Oslo from 14 to 16 June 2011. High on the agenda will be the elaboration of a strengthened policy framework for sustainable forest management throughout Europe

- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) will be playing a key role in a regional conference on forests in Kinshasa being organized by the Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Tourism of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which will raise awareness about the International Year of Forests. The conference is expected to be held in late November/early December 2010. UNESCO will be involved in the conference through the Regional Post-graduate Training School on Integrated Management of Tropical Forests and Lands

7. In addition to the events listed above, a number of Member States and organizations have indicated their intent to hold other communication and outreach activities including:

(a) Competitions: ranging from photo, art, slogan, and essay writing competitions to sports and athletic competitions in forests. Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Georgia, Jamaica, Lebanon, Poland and the Republic of Korea have indicated their plans to organize competitions as part of their International Year of Forests, 2011 activities;

(b) Exhibitions: to draw attention to critical forest issues, ranging from deforestation and forest degradation to the protective functions of forests, are planned, using photography and other visual media to communicate the messages. Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Georgia, Jamaica, Poland and Romania have

indicated their plans to organize exhibitions as part of their International Year of Forests, 2011 activities;

(c) Tree planting: including distribution of seedlings, and providing post-planting information and guidelines are planned as awareness-raising activities to highlight the important role of afforestation and restoration in sustainable forest management activities. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ethiopia, Georgia, Jamaica, Lebanon and Poland, and non-governmental organizations including ENO (Environment Online), have indicated their plans to organize tree plantings as part of their International Year of Forests, 2011 activities. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has specifically indicated plans to plant over 1 billion trees throughout the country during 2011;

(d) Field trips: to forest-protected areas. National parks can play an important role in raising awareness of the general public, youth, journalists and politicians of the importance of forest resources and the factors that threaten national forests. Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Lebanon and Romania have indicated their plans to organize field trips as part of their International Year of Forests, 2011 activities;

(e) Publications: informational materials, including books, brochures, calendars, educational materials, leaflets, pamphlets and posters, are a tried and tested means of communication and outreach. Cyprus, the Czech Republic, El Salvador, Georgia, Jamaica, Morocco, Poland and Romania, as well as ENO (Environment Online), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the secretariat of the Pacific Community have indicated their plans to produce publications as part of their International Year of Forests, 2011 activities;

(f) Other awareness-raising activities: Croatia, Lebanon and Portugal have indicated their plans to organize activities to promote awareness of the role of forests and to foster exchange of practical strategies for promoting sustainable forest management as part of their International Year of Forests, 2011 activities.

IV. Recommendations

8. **Recognizing the need to promote sustainable management of all types of forests at all levels, the General Assembly may wish to consider the following recommendations:**

(a) **Further encourage Member States to promote awareness of challenges and success stories related to implementing sustainable forest management at the national level, including as a means of promoting North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation;**

(b) **Renew its invitation to Member States to establish national coordinating committees or designate focal points to promote and coordinate activities and initiatives related to the International Year of Forests, 2011 at the local and national levels;**

(c) **Further encourage Governments, relevant regional and international organizations and major groups to support activities related to the Year, inter alia, through voluntary contributions, and to link their relevant activities to the Year;**

(d) **Encourage all relevant organs of the United Nations, including functional commissions and regional commissions, as well as United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, to fully support, contribute to and participate in the activities envisaged for the observance of 2011 as the International Year of Forests;**

(e) **Further encourage creation of voluntary partnerships among Member States, international organizations and major groups organizations to facilitate and promote activities related to the Year at the local and national levels;**

(f) **Promote observance of the Year not as an isolated event but as part of a continuing process of advocacy and partnership to foster greater awareness and action towards sustainable forest management at all levels;**

(g) **Include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-sixth session, under the item entitled "Sustainable development", the sub-item entitled "International Year of Forests, 2011";**

(h) **Convene a special one-day high-level event of the General Assembly sixty-sixth session in September 2011, with the participation of Heads of State and Government, to generate public awareness and political action towards sustainable forest management.**

Annex I

International Year of Forests, 2011 logo in all official United Nations languages

Annex II

International Year of Forests, 2011 logo use guidelines

Logo use guidelines

I. Design of the logo

1. The International Year of Forests, 2011 (Forests 2011) logo is designed to convey the theme of "Forests for People", celebrating the central role of people in the sustainable management, conservation and sustainable development of our world's forests. The iconographic elements in the design depict some of the multiple values of forests and the need for a 360-degree perspective: forests provide shelter to people and habitat to biodiversity; are a source of food, medicine and clean water; and play a vital role in maintaining a stable global climate and environment. All of these elements taken together reinforce the message that forests are vital to the survival and well-being of people everywhere, all 7 billion of us.

II. Translation of the logo

2. The International Year of Forests, 2011 (Forests 2011) logo will be available in the six official United Nations languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

3. Member States are encouraged to translate the text "International Year of Forests, 2011" into local languages and send the translated text only in EPS (graphic) file format via e-mail to the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat at forests@un.org.

4. United Nations entities and other organizations using the logo during events or activities organized for the International Year of Forests may use the Forests 2011 logo in conjunction with their organizational logo.

III. Uses of the logo

A. Use of the logo by entities of the United Nations system

5. Entities of the United Nations system may use the International Year of Forests logo without obtaining prior approval from the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat. However, for reporting purposes, the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat should be informed of events and informational materials for which the logo is used. The logo may also be used for publications that the United Nations may produce with or without external partners in connection with Forests 2011, including, inter alia, posters, brochures, books, videos, flash and PowerPoint presentations, banners, illustrations and animations.

B. Use of the logo by non-United Nations entities

6. The International Year of Forests logo is primarily intended for three kinds of promotional use: information, fund-raising and use by a commercial entity. Parties outside the United Nations system may use the logo after obtaining approval from the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat in accordance with the requirements outlined below:

1. Information uses of the logo

7. Information uses of the logo are those which are:

(a) Primarily illustrative;

(b) Not intended to raise funds;

(c) Not carried out by a commercial entity.

8. All entities interested in using the International Year of Forests logo for information purposes must apply to the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat. When requesting approval, the entities should provide:

(a) A short statement of identity (nature of organization and its objectives);

(b) An explanation of how and where the logo will be used;

(c) A waiver of liability (see annex III) must be signed by the entity requesting to use the logo.

2. Fund-raising uses of the logo

9. Fund-raising uses of the logo are those intended to raise resources to cover costs of International Year of Forests activities organized in 2011. Fund-raising uses of the logo may be undertaken only by non-commercial entities. All entities interested in using the International Year of Forests logo for fund-raising purposes must apply for approval to the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat. When requesting permission to use the logo for fund-raising purposes, the entities must provide:

(a) A short statement of identity (membership, objectives, etc.);

(b) An explanation of how and where the logo will be used;

(c) An explanation of how the fund-raising will take place;

(d) A summary budget;

(e) An explanation of how proceeds would be allocated to cover costs of International Year of Forests activities;

(f) A waiver of liability (see annex III) must be signed by the entity requesting to use the logo.

3. Uses of the logo by commercial entities

10. The uses of the logo by commercial entities are all those undertaken by or involving commercial entities, as well as any use intended to lead to commercial or personal profit. All commercial entities interested in using the International Year of

Forests logo must apply for approval to the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat. When requesting permission to use the logo, the commercial entities must provide:

(a) A short statement of identity (nature of company or enterprise);

(b) An explanation of how and where the logo will be used;

(c) The names of countries/territories where the logo will be used;

(d) The nature of products/services that the entity produces/sells in those areas;

(e) How the products relate to the messages of the International Year of Forests;

(f) What profits the entity is expected to make from the use of the logo;

(g) A summary budget, providing expenses and any proposed royalties or contributions the entity is expected to make to local, national or international activities for the preparations for the International Year of Forests in 2011 or in favour of implementation of the activities of the International Year of Forests in 2011.

11. Before the logo is used by a commercial entity, a contract must be signed with the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat. In particular, such contracts must include provisions concerning the waiver of liability (see annex III). Such contracts must also provide the detailed terms and conditions concerning the use of the logo, including the details of the information enumerated above. Additionally, such contracts must contain the United Nations General Conditions of Contract.

4. Length of use of the logo

12. The International Year of Forests logo will be used for a period of two years from July 2010 until June 2012. That period includes the preparation phase in 2010 for the International Year of Forests, the celebrations of the International Year of Forests in 2011, and any subsequent reporting in 2012.

13. The International Year of Forests logo is primarily intended for promotional use, including, inter alia, websites, posters, brochures, books, videos, flash and PowerPoint presentations, banners, illustrations and animations. The logo may be used beyond June 2012 in reference to publications about the International Year of Forests.

IV. Liability

14. All entities authorized to use the International Year of Forests, 2011 logo for the purposes specified herein must agree to the following provisions on waiver of liability:

(a) The entity is responsible for ensuring that the activities are carried out in accordance with the applicable law and for ensuring that the appropriate insurance is maintained to cover the risks arising out of such activities;

(b) The United Nations does not assume any responsibility for the activities of the undersigned;

(c) The entity shall hold harmless and defend the United Nations and its officials against any action that may be brought against the United Nations or its officials as a result of the use of the logo.

15. When the logo is used for information and fund-raising purposes, the waiver of liability form must be signed by the entity. When the logo is used by a commercial entity, the above provisions on waiver of liability must be incorporated into a contract to be signed by the entity. All duly signed waiver of liability forms and contracts must be received by the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat before the proposed activities are carried out.

V. Inquiries

16. Please send inquiries to:

United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat
Attention: International Year of Forests, 2011 Team
Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
1 United Nations Plaza, DC 1 — 1245,
New York, NY 10017, USA

Fax: +1 917 367 3186
E-mail: forests@un.org

Annex III

Waiver of liability for use of the logo of "International Year of Forests, 2011"

The undersigned acknowledges that, in using the logo for the International Year of Forests as explained in its submission dated _____ to the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat:

(a) The undersigned is responsible for ensuring that the activities are carried out in accordance with the applicable law and for ensuring that the appropriate insurance is maintained to cover the risks arising out of such activities;

(b) The United Nations does not assume any responsibility for the activities of the undersigned;

(c) The entity shall hold harmless and defend the United Nations and its officials against any action that may be brought against the United Nations or its officials as a result of the use of the logo.

Signed

_____

Full name (block letters)

_____

Affiliation (block letters)

_____

Name of organization

_____

E-mail

_____

Date

_____

Please send the signed waiver form to:

United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat
Attention: International Year of Forests, 2011 Team
Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
1 United Nations Plaza, DC 1 — 1245,
New York, NY 10017, USA

Fax: +1 917 367 3186
E-mail: forests@un.org

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Sixty-fifth session
Item 24 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Eradication of poverty and other development issues

Implementation of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017)

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/216, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017) detailing the response of the United Nations system to the theme "Full employment and decent work for all". The report reviews current progress, highlighting the system-wide plan of action for the Second Decade. It presents initiatives and activities being undertaken by relevant organizations of the United Nations system in response to the plan of action, and concludes with a set of recommendations.

* A/65/150.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report details the current response of the United Nations system to "Full employment and decent work for all", a theme of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017). It reviews progress over the past two years, highlighting the activities and collaborative initiatives being carried out by a number of entities to implement the system-wide plan of action for the Second Decade and to strengthen the coherence and coordination of the United Nations system in this regard. The information in the report is based on the contributions received from various entities within the system. The report concludes with a number of recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly.

II. Full employment, decent work and poverty

2. The selection of "Full employment and decent work for all" as a theme of the Second Decade underscores the recognition that poverty is a multidimensional and complex phenomenon that goes beyond income poverty, and addresses multiple deprivations facing the poor and the most vulnerable in the areas of employment, health, education, gender equality and social exclusion. The promotion of full and productive employment as one of the three pillars of social development, together with poverty eradication and social integration, was set by the World Summit for Social Development in 1995.

3. The linkages between poverty eradication and employment and decent work were further highlighted at the 2005 World Summit, which placed full and productive employment and decent work for all at the forefront of the United Nations development agenda. The Summit highlighted a global consensus that employment and decent work need to be at the centre of economic and social policies aimed at achieving the target of Millennium Development Goal 1, namely to reduce poverty by half by 2015. The inclusion of a new employment target under this Goal is further evidence of the centrality of full employment and decent work for all as an effective and sustainable pathway to poverty reduction.

4. In 2006, the Economic and Social Council addressed the issue of full employment and decent work for all and adopted a ministerial declaration reiterating the central role of employment and decent work in poverty eradication and development. The Council also stressed the need to integrate those objectives into relevant national and international development and poverty eradication strategies to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

5. With only five years to reach the targets of 2015, the achievement of poverty reduction is a significant challenge that has been made more difficult by the global food, energy and financial crises. Even before the crises, the lack of progress in creating productive and decent jobs despite relatively high rates of economic growth in many countries gave rise to a phenomenon referred to as "jobless growth". Subdued job growth and stagnant agricultural productivity in many rural areas are two major reasons for the persistence of poverty and the rise in the number of working poor.

6. The ongoing global financial and economic crisis has turned into a global jobs crisis, pushing the rates of unemployment to significantly higher levels. This has negatively affected the poor and the most vulnerable in particular. In 2008, some

633 million, namely 21.2 per cent of the world's workers, lived with their families on less than $1.25 a day and, in 2009, that number increased by up to 215 million, including 100 million in South Asia and 28 million in sub-Saharan Africa.[1] This suggests that up to 7 per cent more workers were at risk of falling into poverty between 2008 and 2009. While there may be some signs of recovery in a few large emerging economies, for the most vulnerable, the global crises are far from over. Unemployment and precarious work remain high. Incomes of poor households in urban and rural areas suffer from declining wages and earnings, increased informality, reverse migration and volatile prices of food and fuel. Prolonged joblessness is anticipated, as lessons from the past financial crises show that employment tends to recover some years after output recovery.

7. The reduction in employment and income opportunities has led to setbacks in the modest progress in poverty reduction. It threatens to undermine the prospects for achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and calls into question the sustainability of global poverty reduction. This reality suggests the need for new, more flexible development strategies that focus as much on supporting the welfare of the poor as on strengthening productive capacities and creating opportunities for the majority of the labour force. Universal social protection and stronger employment policies and programmes are critical components. In the face of the crises, pragmatic policies that strike a balance between the imperative of fiscal sustainability and job recovery are essential.

8. As the crises persist, methods of more prolonged stabilization are being discussed, in an effort to suppress joblessness and support the goal of full employment. These include development-oriented macroeconomic policies and a reform of the international monetary and financial system. In 2008, the President of the General Assembly launched an important initiative to establish a Commission of Experts on Reforms of the International Monetary and Financial System. In its recommendations, the Commission recognized the need to protect people's livelihoods, and its report fed into the deliberations of the Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development, held in June 2009.

9. In its key recommendations, the Conference emphasized the importance of moving away from a macroeconomic policy framework narrowly focused on controlling inflation and budget deficits to one that aims at full employment and decent work. The Conference also highlighted the need for enhanced policy and fiscal space to enable countries to address the human and social impacts of the crises and provide social protection (see General Assembly resolution 63/303). Both the Commission and the Conference highlighted the pivotal role that the United Nations must play in this regard, specifically in providing oversight and coordination of the global financial architecture to ensure that economic and social stability are bolstered and in providing technical assistance to Governments in the coordination of macroeconomic and development policy. The need for a strengthened and more coherent United Nations system in responding to the crises was deemed imperative.

[1] International Labour Organization, *Global Employment Trends*, January 2010.

III. Strengthened coherence of the United Nations system: a system-wide approach

10. Over the past two years, efforts were made to ensure better policy coherence and synergy and collaborative action through bringing together the respective capacities and expertise of the United Nations system in support of national efforts to promote employment and decent work towards poverty eradication.

11. As requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/230, the Secretary-General appointed the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs as the focal point for coordination of the implementation of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017).

12. In collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat submitted a proposal to develop a coordinated and coherent system-wide plan of action for poverty eradication with a focus on employment and decent work to the seventeenth session of the High-level Committee on Programmes of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), held in February 2009. It was proposed that, as the principal body for system-wide coordination in the programme area, the Committee should establish a small time-bound cluster group of agencies to facilitate this process. Given the broad expression of interest by many agencies, a total of 21 United Nations agencies, funds, programmes and regional commissions, co-led by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and ILO, prepared a draft system-wide plan of action for poverty eradication. The plan of action was reviewed and endorsed by the Committee at its meeting in October 2009.

13. The overall objective of the system-wide plan of action is to enhance the coherence of United Nations system-wide activities in the area of employment and decent work towards poverty eradication in the context of the ongoing global financial and economic crises.[2] It is built around activities where synergies would lead to substantial increased benefits. The framework and platform developed in support of the *Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work* endorsed by the Board and promoted for use in Economic and Social Council resolution 2007/2 on the role of the United Nations system in providing full employment and decent work for all have proven an important basis upon which to build policy coherence. The objective of the toolkit is to enhance the impact of the United Nations system with respect to employment and decent work as a contribution to a system-wide coherent approach to poverty alleviation, development and employment promotion.

14. The ongoing financial and economic crisis and its impact have been taken into account in the follow-up to the mandate of General Assembly resolution 63/230 and the articulation of the system-wide response to the theme of the Second Decade. Two of the joint CEB crisis-response initiatives launched in 2009 against the backdrop of the global financial and economic crisis pertain to employment and decent work opportunities in particular, namely the Global Jobs Pact and the Social Protection Floor. The cluster group intends to liaise with the respective agencies leading these two initiatives, in order to avoid duplication of work, seek inputs to the work of the cluster group and foster mutual support.

[2] The plan of action is available from www.un.org/esa/socdev/social/poverty/2nddecade.html.

15. As a concrete step to strengthening United Nations system cohesion and coordination, the system-wide plan of action covers four types of joint activities: promoting greater awareness about employment and decent work as an effective development strategy for poverty eradication; strengthening capacity-building (training, skills development and knowledge-sharing); sharing good practices in promoting employment and decent work at the national and international levels; and providing support in integrating decent work towards poverty eradication into national and international policies and programmes.

16. The plan of action places particular emphasis on employment creation, including youth employment; social protection, especially of the poor and other vulnerable groups; standards and rights at work; and the impact of the global crisis on employment. In implementing these activities, the United Nations system plans to work closely with Member States, non-governmental organizations, civil society and other relevant stakeholders, in support of national efforts to eradicate poverty.

IV. United Nations system-wide plan of action for the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017): activities and collaborative initiatives

17. The various agencies, funds, programmes and regional commissions of the United Nations system have applied the goals of the plan of action for the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017) in the formulation of niche activities and collaborative efforts aimed at achieving full employment and decent work for all. The activities described below are based on the contributions received from the featured organizations.

A. Promote greater awareness about employment and decent work as an effective development strategy for poverty eradication

18. The plan of action seeks outcomes such as the commitment by Member States and other key stakeholders to promote full employment and decent work for poverty eradication, in particular by creating employment for disadvantaged groups, building a partnership for the Second Decade, and promoting the Global Jobs Pact and Social Protection Floor Initiatives.

19. In realizing its mandate, ILO is devoted to advancing opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Decent work country programmes are the main vehicle for delivery of ILO support to countries. The objectives of these programmes are to promote decent work as a key component of national development strategies and to organize ILO knowledge, instruments, advocacy and cooperation at the service of its tripartite constituents in a results-based framework to advance the decent work agenda.

20. The ILO played a leading role in the establishment and promotion of the Global Jobs Pact, which was adopted at the International Labour Conference in June 2009 and endorsed by CEB, the Economic and Social Council and, more recently, the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The Pact is a global partnership

framework aimed at assisting the poor and the vulnerable through the acceleration of employment creation, the promotion of sustainable enterprise, the establishment of social protection systems and the strengthening of labour standards and social dialogue. It provides a portfolio of crisis-response measures built around the decent work agenda, which aims at reducing the time lag between output recovery and the recovery of decent work opportunities. It is also one of CEB's nine crisis-response initiatives. The ILO is the lead agency, and the initiatives to implement the goals of the Pact are being developed in collaboration with other cooperating agencies.

21. The ILO has acted with the World Health Organization (WHO), as co-lead agency for the CEB Social Protection Floor Initiative. The agencies recently released a manual and strategic framework for joint United Nations country operations that offers policy strategies and tools for ensuring a minimum level of access to services, including health and education and income security for all. Knowledge and success stories are being shared among the countries drawing on a variety of methodologies, including South-South learning, triangular training and online and distance learning.

22. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has also been instrumental in promoting decent work as a poverty eradication strategy. Rural employment is part of FAO's strategic objective, which aims to provide an enabling environment for markets to improve livelihoods and rural development. Decent rural employment concerns are also directly linked with such strategic objectives as improved food security and better nutrition and gender equity in access to resources, goods, services and decision-making in rural areas. *The State of Food and Agriculture 2010* will therefore focus on gender and agriculture and address gender inequalities in rural labour markets. It will also examine decent work conditions in rural areas, reflecting on such qualitative characteristics of rural employment as occupational safety and health and social protection.

23. The FAO has been actively involved in awareness-raising activities in relation to decent work, in particular in the context of the abolition of child labour in agriculture, as well as gender and rural employment. It has committed to work with ILO to improve and diversify the livelihoods of the rural poor, both women and men, and to broaden opportunities for decent work and full employment in rural areas. The two organizations also collaborate within the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture by organizing joint workshops and annual events for World Day against Child Labour.

24. The UNDP recognizes employment as the mediating variable between growth and poverty reduction and as being central to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The UNDP strategic plan mandates its contribution to the ILO-led Global Jobs Pact. Like ILO, UNDP emphasizes job creation through sustainable private sector development; macroeconomic reforms and sectoral policies to promote employment-led growth; entrepreneurship development initiatives to promote self-employment and small enterprise development; capacity development initiatives to promote investment and competitiveness in employment growth-potential sectors; access to finance initiatives to encourage investment and employment growth in micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises; vocational education and training initiatives; and temporary employment creation and employment guarantee schemes.

25. Consistent with the requirements of the Global Jobs Pact, UNDP's analytical efforts will focus on six thematic areas: promoting "green" jobs that maximize the effect of investments in environmental conservation and rehabilitation with employment creation and poverty reduction in developing countries; understanding the impact of specific policy measures on employment creation, including microcredit programmes; exploring, with ILO, the linkages between business environment reforms and transition to the formal sector; promoting policy best practices that increase the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises and economic sectors with the potential for employment growth; and identifying opportunities for sustainable private-sector investments that increase employment opportunities for the poor.

26. In its support of the activities of the least developed countries, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has also emphasized that decent work in the productive sectors is key to lifting people out of poverty. The third conference of the Ministers of Industry and Trade of the least developed countries, held in Vienna in December 2009, examined the impact of the global economic crisis on the least developed countries and its repercussions in the short and medium term. The ministerial declaration and plan of action endorsed by the General Conference will be implemented through policy strategy and research projects. These activities will focus on priority areas in which scope for employment is essential, namely agro-industries, innovation and technology transfer, private sector development, including corporate social responsibility and decent work, and policy space, governance and institution-building.

27. Through its corporate social responsibility activities and advocacy as a member of the Global Compact, UNIDO promotes the benefits of decent work as an integral strategy for increasing productivity and competitiveness in developing economies. For example, in 2009, its field office in Viet Nam developed an initiative to promote corporate social responsibility among Vietnamese small and medium-sized enterprises, to improve linkages with global supply chains in sustainable production.

28. The World Bank's framework to achieve sustainable poverty reduction emphasizes the need to promote the creation of more and better jobs, given that labour is the main asset of the poor. It has developed a conceptual framework called "MILES" that brings together five sets of policies: macroeconomics, investment climate and infrastructure, labour market regulations and institutions, education and skills development, and social protection. The World Bank contributes to raising awareness about decent work through research to support the implementation of the MILES framework, the publication of books, social protection discussion papers, employment policy primers, a social protection and labour website, and a social protection blog.

29. Within the United Nations Secretariat, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs is responsible for promoting and supporting international cooperation to advance the United Nations development agenda, in particular poverty eradication. Its key activities include providing normative and policy support to the intergovernmental processes in economic, social and environmental areas, conducting analysis and research on key development challenges and policy options, namely the eradication of poverty, and operational activities.

30. In providing support to the intergovernmental process, the Department has engaged in activities to raise the visibility of the critical role of full employment and decent work for all in poverty eradication. Specifically, the Commission for Social Development focused its 2007-2008 biennial cycle on the priority theme "Promoting full employment and decent work for all", taking into account its relationship to poverty eradication and social integration (see E/CN.5/2008/4). It held high-level panel discussions on the priority theme and on the theme "Full employment and decent work: intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women". In support of these intergovernmental deliberations, the Department prepared substantive reports and convened expert group meetings and the United Nations Development Cooperation Forum on the theme of employment and decent work.

31. In 2009-2010, the Commission discussed the impact of the global crises on employment and social development, and policy responses on employment and the social consequences of the financial and economic crisis, including its gender dimension. At its 2011-2012 review and policy sessions, the Commission will consider poverty eradication, taking into account its relationship to full employment and decent work for all and social integration.

32. The Department's recent flagship publication, *Report on the World Social Situation 2010: Rethinking Poverty*, is also key in its recent promotion of full employment and decent work as a means of poverty reduction. The report reviews global, regional and selected country poverty trends and reflects on issues of poverty measurement, with the intent of contributing to a better understanding of the complex and multidimensional aspects of poverty. It recommends a reconsideration of the policy approaches that have dominated the discourse on growth and poverty to date. The report considers the contribution of both the growth- and inequality-centred approaches to poverty reduction, including macroeconomic policies and labour market and other social policies, and urges the promotion of inclusive development that benefits poor people.

33. The publication *World Economic Situation and Prospects* is a collaborative effort of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the five regional commissions that has played a significant role in the Department's efforts to promote full employment and decent work as central to poverty eradication and sustainable development. More specifically, *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2010* addresses the connection between rising employment instability and poverty, as well as the need to ensure better coordination of macroeconomic policy to promote long-term stabilization, which could support the goal of full employment. As the convening body of the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs, the Department recently initiated the process to help Member States build their macroeconomic capacity.

34. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) also supports the promotion of the decent work agenda and undertakes research and analysis on the evolution of the Latin American and Caribbean labour markets and the need to improve the contribution to poverty reduction in the region. The Commission's flagship publications, *Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean* and *Preliminary Overview of the Economies of Latin America and the*

Caribbean, discuss the evolution of jobs and wages and analyse the impact of economic growth on the labour market.

35. In addition, *Social Panorama of Latin America*, another ECLAC publication, regularly contains specific chapters on issues related to the labour market, with an emphasis on its link to poverty reduction. The 2008 report analysed the contribution of job growth, labour incomes and demographic factors to the reduction of poverty registered in the region before the economic and financial crisis.

B. Strengthen capacity-building through training, skills development and knowledge-sharing

36. In its aim to ensure that the activities of the United Nations system support the integration of decent work towards poverty eradication into national and international policies and programmes, the plan of action also seeks to enhance the capacity of countries in this area and to promote sectoral, national and international policies to address decent work as a pathway to eradicate poverty.

37. The FAO has been actively involved in several capacity-building activities on decent work through different partnerships and programmes. In 2007-2008, a self-assessment of the employment dimensions of FAO's work was undertaken, using the United Nations system-wide *Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work*. Based on the outcomes of the self-assessment, an FAO rural employment strategy was formulated to mainstream decent rural employment within the organization and enable it to provide support to member countries in the design and implementation of effective policies, strategies and programmes to promote decent rural employment.

38. The FAO has also been involved in numerous employment-related United Nations joint programmes, including on enhancing youth employability and entrepreneurship in several countries in Africa and Asia. The promotion of rural youth employment has been ensured mainly through the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools skills-building approach. Over the past several years, this training was promoted in 17 countries, with some 25,000 youths graduating from the schools.

39. The ILO has undertaken efforts to strengthen the national capacity of countries to collect labour and employment statistics and has embarked on a comprehensive approach to compiling detailed indicator definitions of decent work, as well as decent work country profiles. In-depth reports are being prepared for 10 countries. The organization is also providing technical assistance to countries to improve data collection for reporting on Millennium Development Goal 1, target 1.B, "Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people".

40. The ILO International Training Centre at Turin, Italy, has also contributed to building the institutional capacity of ILO constituents and partners through training and promoting knowledge-sharing. The Centre has helped to translate ILO knowledge into learning tools and processes and to disseminate its standards, principles and policies to a large international audience. Training activities covered a broad range of subjects related to the decent work agenda and to capacity-building for economic and social development. Over 900 training and learning activities were implemented, involving 24,000 participants from 190 countries, including ILO and

other United Nations staff. Over 25 per cent were representatives of employers' or workers' organizations, and approximately 43 per cent were women.

41. The ILO has also responded to a significant number of requests from countries for support in establishing and improving labour market analysis and national employment policy development. Particular progress was made in helping Africa to focus on its priorities. Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Madagascar, the Niger, Nigeria, Togo and the United Republic of Tanzania developed national employment policies endorsed by the social partners that included components of the global employment agenda, and moved towards action planning. Other regions made strides that reflect the comparative strength of the ILO presence in Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America.

42. The ILO has also developed employment impact assessment tools and has promoted the assessment of employment potential in public infrastructure investments. It provides technical assistance in designing, monitoring and evaluating the impact of infrastructure components of public investment programmes and holds open courses for Government officials and social partners at the Turin Centre.

43. The UNDP has undertaken capacity development initiatives to promote investment and competitiveness in sectors with potential for employment growth. These initiatives account for the single largest share of UNDP employment and private sector development programming. They include measures to support the development of regional and local economic development agencies, business service centres and a growing portfolio of value-chain interventions designed to build the capacity of small producers, connect them to new markets and address policy, institutional and other constraints.

44. Examples of UNDP country-level programmes include a project linking textile and apparel small and medium-sized enterprises to manufacturers and international brands in Turkey; assistance in upgrading production and standards in the garment sector in the Lao People's Democratic Republic; and support for small-scale farmers and agricultural value chains in several countries.

45. The UNDP also has programmes to support labour-market restructuring through vocational education and training focused on three main areas: the direct delivery of vocational training; workforce integration (assisting such excluded groups as youth, women, the long-term unemployed, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and ex-combatants in acquiring skills and accessing new employment opportunities); and capacity-building for such labour-market institutions as line ministries, public employment services and vocational training centres. For example, the UNDP office in Kosovo initiated an institutional and enterprise-based training scheme that combines core employability skills with enterprise-based training, to provide job-specific skills to unskilled youths who are seeking work. In 2008, 526 young people benefited from the programme. Other examples of such projects include vocational education and training programmes for women in Jordan, street children in Kyrgyzstan and intravenous drug users and HIV victims in Poland; and the establishment of youth-employment resource centres in the Syrian Arab Republic.

46. Within its urban niche, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme

In 2009, over 660 youth benefited from training in construction skills and low-cost building technologies under the UN-Habitat Lake Victoria Region Water and Sanitation Initiative. The Initiative supports youth groups to become small-scale operators of water and sanitation facilities, and training is designed to maximize income and expand the opportunities for youth to engage in the small business sector.

47. UN-Habitat and UNIDO initiated a project to promote income generation and the improvement of rural employment in Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, as part of an urban-rural linkages programme. The main objective of the project is to enhance the capacity of vulnerable groups to participate in the employment and income-generation process and to promote urban-rural integrated development through production and market linkages between urban and rural areas.

48. Within its focus on industrial enterprise, UNIDO developed its Responsible Entrepreneurs Achievement Programme to build the capacity of small and medium-sized enterprises to implement corporate social responsibility-based management approaches and operation methods, aligning economic, social and environmental aspects of business. In December 2009, a training course was organized for business advisers from different regions.

49. UNIDO continues to work with other agencies to build capacity in corporate social responsibility among the private sector, including small and medium-sized enterprises. Decent work is a core element of those programmes. The UNIDO Entrepreneurship Curriculum Programme teaches entrepreneurial skills to secondary-level schoolchildren and vocational training institutes in both urban and rural areas of Mozambique, Namibia, Timor-Leste and Uganda, providing young people with practical tools for economic opportunities, including employment.

50. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) provides technical assistance to countries to promote tourism as an engine to foster socio-economic development and create employment and decent work, especially for disadvantaged groups. It addresses human resources development in the tourism sector, by developing strategies and organizing training. Human resources development and employment creation are also explicitly mentioned in tourism master plans, tourism laws and destination management plans that WTO helps to develop. The contribution of tourism to local economic development is addressed in projects that focus on pro-poor tourism development. In projects implemented at the local level, WTO engages the local government and liaises with local workers' associations and local employers' organizations. In many projects, multi-stakeholder collaboration is established to help the tourism sector work for the poor.

51. At the World Bank, capacity-building is a major priority and is actively pursued in several areas. The labour market core course "Jobs for a globalizing world: labour market policy" offers a learning experience on how employment is being transformed in today's rapidly changing, globalizing environment. The joint ILO-World Bank training course "Coping with the global job crisis in South-East Europe" contributed to a better understanding of the role of policies and institutions, and their interactions, in determining labour market performance and social inclusion in South-East Europe in the context of the global job crisis. The upcoming course on "Promoting job quality and productive employment in the Middle East

labour market and employment policies, taking into account changing labour market realities in the region.

52. Within the Latin American and Caribbean region, ECLAC plays an important role in improving the fundamental sources for the analysis of labour markets and decent work, especially national household surveys. ECLAC prepared a manual on the inclusion of modules on ageing in household surveys, that includes a specific proposal to collect information on social security, employment and poverty in old age. It also conducted studies on the effects of trade agreements, specifically the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR), on employment and poverty. To have a positive and significant impact on job creation, the agreements must be accompanied by adequate macroeconomic and employment policies geared to promoting economic growth, employment and human capital formation.

C. Share best practices in promoting employment and decent work at the national and international levels

53. Sharing good practices in promoting employment and decent work facilitates the identification of areas where system-wide collaboration would lead to substantial increased benefits for poverty eradication. The plan of action aims to enhance the activities of the United Nations system in the area of employment and decent work for poverty eradication through the sharing of experiences, training programmes and good practices related to the four pillars of decent work and through the exchange of gender-sensitive information. Specific attention is paid to youth and other vulnerable segments of the workforce and to specific issues faced by informal and rural workers.

54. The FAO has an innovative database on sources of income, which currently includes 32 surveys covering 15 countries from different regions. The rural income-generating activities data set includes both household-level income information and detailed information on wage employment in urban and rural areas. It is used to examine key policy issues, including income diversification, rural wage employment and gender and rural employment.

55. The ILO produces timely information and statistical data on labour market trends, which are indispensable for the preparation of appropriate policy responses. This information is published in, inter alia, *Global Employment Trends*, *World of Work Report* and *Global Wage Report*.

56. Through its knowledge networks, UNDP provides a mechanism for the exchange of practical experiences and knowledge on the implementation of employment-related programmes. In the past two years, the networks have channelled questions regarding how to proactively identify demand for employment in private sectors in Panama and evaluate training providers; implement employment guarantee programmes for the urban poor in India; develop programmes targeting both educated and unskilled youth in Tunisia; and determine a baseline for a women's self-employment project in Timor-Leste. The networks also provide a platform for e-discussion on conceptual issues, such as the linkages between employment and poverty reduction.

57. In collaboration with its regional bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNDP organized a conference to explore experiences on employment guarantee schemes in 2009. The event was attended by academics, experts and UNDP representatives of Latin American country offices.

58. The National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme in India is an example of one such UNDP-supported programme. Within the scheme, a minimum of 100 days' wage employment is guaranteed to all eligible persons. The UNDP generated awareness about the scheme among potential participants, informing them about their rights and the benefits of the programme. This proved to be crucial in creating demand for work, and helped to ensure transparency in payment of wages and efficiency in administration by introducing innovative technologies such as "smart" cards and by digitizing information.

59. Fourteen CEB member agencies carried out self-assessments and developed action plans using the CEB *Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work*. At the country level, the toolkit was used for the preparation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) or joint programmes in Argentina, Indonesia, Pakistan, Serbia, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Viet Nam and Yemen.

60. The WTO programme on sustainable tourism for the elimination of poverty provides information on the relationship between tourism and poverty reduction, implements projects to make the tourism sector work for the poor, and strives to include the poverty reduction potential of tourism in poverty reduction strategy papers.

61. The Youth Employment Network, a partnership between ILO, the World Bank and the United Nations Secretariat, facilitates the exchange of information on what works in youth-employment policies and programmes through an international workshop featuring best practices and experiences in the design and implementation of youth-employment programmes. Through capacity-building activities for policymakers and youth-employment practitioners, the Network has raised awareness about the importance of measuring the results of youth-employment programmes and has promoted the use of evaluation evidence in the design and implementation of youth-employment initiatives.

62. The ILO and the World Bank are engaged in the dissemination of lessons learned in several areas of social assistance through: the pooling of knowledge on public works programmes; developing a map of social assistance programmes; labour market research and analysis; ILO core labour standards; and youth and children, through the Understanding Children's Work initiative.

63. The most recent international conferences on social protection and employment organized by the World Bank focused on achieving social protection for all and disseminating the lessons of public works experiences. At the Second Rio de Janeiro Conference on Human Development, the World Bank launched its report "Achieving effective social protection for all in Latin America and the Caribbean: from right to reality", which featured the results of a study in Latin America and the Caribbean on universal social protection through improved redistribution and the adaptation of programmes to labour markets.

64. The World Bank's public works learning forum in Arusha shared knowledge

implementation of public works programmes. The main objectives were to share emerging experiences on "how to" aspects of public works programmes in low-income countries; lay the groundwork for the formation of a "community of practice" that would continue to share knowledge and expertise; and catalyse improved understanding of the role of public works programmes as part of national safety net and social protection agendas.

65. ECLAC encourages the sharing of experiences on the inclusion of the right to decent work and social security in international standards and policies on ageing at meetings of experts and national and regional seminars. A recently concluded technical cooperation project analysed the integration of vulnerable groups in the labour markets of selected countries, emphasizing the situation of low-skilled women and youth. Policy options were studied and discussed with policymakers and other stakeholders at national workshops and a regional seminar.

66. In cooperation with the Ibero-American Youth Organization, ECLAC published two volumes of reports on multiple issues concerning young people in Latin America, such as their living and cultural conditions, education and youth labour markets. The reports include recommendations on the different policy areas covered, and were presented at summit meetings and other governmental and non-governmental forums to stimulate intraregional debate on this issue.

D. Support the integration of decent work and poverty eradication into national and international policies and programmes

67. The plan of action strives to better equip the United Nations system to maximize the effectiveness of its poverty eradication efforts and to better support Member States to implement their national initiatives.

68. The FAO helps to ensure that rural employment creation, access to land and income diversification are integrated into agricultural and rural development policies, programmes and partnerships.

69. The FAO is preparing country profiles for selected developing countries on social and gender inequalities, with a focus on income diversification and rural employment. These profiles will serve as a policy support tool to develop a strategic country support approach towards a better reflection of decent rural employment considerations in national policies and development plans. The approach will be implemented in close collaboration with United Nations country teams and inter-agency mechanisms, including UNDAFs, the United Nations joint programmes and decent work country programmes.

70. The FAO is also promoting advocacy work on the importance of decent rural employment considerations in the framework of the Comprehensive Africa Development Programme of the New Partnership for Africa's Development as the main delivery mechanism of investment in agriculture in Africa. In particular, FAO is supporting the mainstreaming of decent rural employment considerations in several national and regional compacts of the Comprehensive Africa Development Programme.

71. At the global level, UNDP is working to operationalize the concept of employment-led growth and, in particular, to enable Governments to evaluate trade-offs between the promotion of employment-intensive economic sectors and the

demands of long-term productivity and competitiveness. Meanwhile, building on earlier work on the growth-employment-poverty nexus, UNDP will advocate for the integration of employment-led growth strategies, including private sector development strategies, in poverty reduction strategy papers and other national programming frameworks.

72. The UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), ILO and the International Organization for Migration in Albania started the implementation of a joint programme on youth employment and migration funded through the "Millennium Development Goal achievement fund". The project is being piloted in two regions of Albania, and seeks to enhance youth employment and migration management through better alignment of the national strategies that address those issues. It builds on three interlinked outcomes that aim to strengthen the capacity of labour market institutions to integrate and operationalize national policy priorities through a coherent youth-employment action plan; devise strategies that minimize the risks of migration of disadvantaged youth from rural areas; and increase the positive impact of migration.

73. The Poverty-Environment Initiative of UNDP and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) provides support to countries to mainstream pro-poor environmental sustainability into national development processes. Such mainstreaming will ensure that poverty reduction is not undermined by unsustainable use of environmental resources.

74. In partnership with other United Nations organizations, UNEP and ILO support countries under the Green Economy and Green Jobs Initiatives to design pathways to environmentally and socially sustainable development. The Green Jobs Initiative aims to promote opportunity and equity and mobilize Governments, employers and workers to engage in dialogue on coherent policies and effective programmes leading to a green economy, with green jobs and decent work for all. The *Green Jobs Report: Towards Decent Work in a Sustainable Low-carbon World* sheds light on the impact that transformation to a green economy will have on work, on enterprise and on the way people earn a living. The partnership is currently working on a green economy project aimed at making a macroeconomic case for increasing public and private investments in "green sectors". The Green Economy Report will attempt to show that such investments contribute to economic development, the creation of decent jobs and poverty reduction in developing countries, while reducing carbon emissions and environmental degradation.

75. UN-Habitat has undertaken several activities, including the organization of networking and learning events, the incorporation of policy statements in campaign messages on sustainable urbanization and rural development, and the sharing of lessons learned from the "Opportunities Fund for Urban Youth-Led Development" initiative. In collaboration with UNEP, ILO, UNICEF and the Global Compact, UN-Habitat organized 24 training events on employment and job-related issues at the fifth session of the World Urban Forum in March 2010. It also launched the World Urban Campaign to promote smarter, greener and more equitable cities. This campaign aims to increase the importance of sustainable urbanization in public policy and public and private investments, and to mobilize global partners.

76. *State of the Urban Youth 2010/2011: Levelling the Playing Field* is the first report that supplements the *State of the World's Cities Report* with a focus on urban youth. The report calls for international and national support for urban youth and

focuses on youth exclusion from opportunities in urban areas, to raise the visibility of this critical issue. It argues for targeted youth programmes to ensure their equal access to opportunities and highlights two key issues affecting youth, namely access to education and employment.

77. Through the World Bank's Social Investment and Employment Promotion Project in Bulgaria, more than 700,000 people benefited from small social infrastructure improvements and services at the municipal and community levels. Approximately 25,000 people benefited from such activities as improved employment services, training for vulnerable people, small business support through virtual incubators, and local economic development planning, and some 6,000 people were placed in jobs.

78. In Brazil, the World Bank is undertaking an economic and sectoral programme on job quality to support the creation of more and better jobs. The programme aims to deepen understanding of the behaviour of labour markets in Brazil by identifying and analysing a range of job quality indicators; identifying the linkages between growth and trade patterns, employment creation and job quality; and providing guidance to labour market analysts to identify policies that enhance the quality of jobs.

79. In 2008, the World Bank initiated the Rural Migrant Skills Development and Employment Project in China, to support the transition of rural workers to urban areas to access better employment opportunities. Policies and institutional capacity-building measures in the areas of skills development, employment services and worker protection are the main priorities of the project. The measures aim to enhance the capacity of the targeted provinces to deliver training, improve the provision of labour market information and public employment services for rural migrants, improve the employment conditions of migrant workers, increase awareness of workers' rights, and support legal services for migrants.

80. The World Bank is currently preparing several regional studies, with a view to developing strategies to reduce informality and increase the employability of vulnerable workers. This includes a study on informality in the Middle East and North Africa and another on jobs in South Asia. The World Bank is also preparing a flagship report on skills and employability in several regions.

81. The Youth Employment Network initiated an exercise to establish benchmarks for youth employment policies through collecting and sharing information on youth labour market indicators in the Network's lead countries and actions taken by Governments to address youth unemployment and underemployment. The goal is to identify benchmarks for successful gender-sensitive youth employment initiatives that can be shared and replicated in peer lead countries.

82. The involvement of civil society partners is instrumental in realizing the objectives of the plan of action. The United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service has issued a publication, entitled *Decent Work and Fair Globalization: A Guide to Policy Dialogue*, which recognizes that the policy implications of reintegrating full productive employment in the global economic and development agenda have not yet been fully explored. The publication maps out the ramifications of this commitment in terms of holding economic governance institutions more accountable for implementing the goals related to full and decent employment. It aims to strengthen the advocacy of civil society organizations campaigning for

greater economic and social justice by providing tools for more informed policy dialogue on how to align macroeconomic, trade and financial policies with these new objectives.

83. Minimum wages and labour inspections are important instruments for progress in achieving decent work. In Central America and Mexico, ECLAC has undertaken a study on the advantages and disadvantages of minimum wage regulations and in-shop labour inspection as policy instruments to promote quality jobs and economic development, and has developed corresponding proposals for the improvement of these instruments.

84. ECLAC has also studied the benefits of integrating specific groups such as older workers and migrants in the labour market. It has also analysed the dynamics of rural labour markets, stressing the need to tailor national employment policies to rural and urban markets and promote greater gender equality.

85. Together with the ILO regional office, ECLAC has published two bulletins on the impact of the financial and economic crisis on the Latin American and Caribbean labour markets, that show how the work and living conditions of millions of people have deteriorated because of the crisis, reversing the previous trend of poverty reduction in the region. The bulletins highlight the fact that previous macroeconomic policies had reduced the vulnerability of the region's economies and created space for countercyclical policies to be applied during the crisis. A broad set of labour market policies has also been implemented, and the bulletins highlight good practices in this policy area.

V. Conclusion and recommendations

86. **The Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017) is an important framework for action to enhance the activities of the United Nations system in support of national efforts to eradicate poverty, in particular national development strategies. Its aim of coordinating international support for the eradication of poverty serves as a key link in support of the integrated follow-up to the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.**

87. **The theme of "Full employment and decent work for all" has been a critical and timely theme, in particular against the backdrop of the unfolding global financial and economic crisis. It has earned broad support from the United Nations system and has resulted in improved policy coherence and coordination on the part of United Nations agencies in promoting and implementing employment and decent work for poverty eradication. The United Nations system has joined forces and committed to specific implementation steps, as spelled out in the United Nations system-wide plan of action for the Second Decade endorsed by the High-level Committee on Programmes of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination. The plan of action provides an important instrument through which Member States and the United Nations system can effectively address the global priority of employment and decent work for poverty eradication.**

88. **The major threat to global efforts for poverty eradication during the Second Decade will be the crises and their impacts on employment and decent**

work opportunities. An effective response to this threat will require renewed efforts to further enhance policy coherence and cooperation in the United Nations system. The successful implementation of the goals of the Second Decade, including the system-wide plan of action, requires increased efforts and collaboration by Member States, civil society, non-governmental organizations, and all relevant partners.

89. The General Assembly may wish to consider the following recommendations:

(a) Call upon Member States to continue to support the theme "Full employment and decent work for all" for the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017) and the related United Nations system-wide plan of action for the Second Decade;

(b) Call upon the relevant organizations of the United Nations system to continue to give priority to implementing the system-wide plan of action for the Second Decade, in collaboration with Member States, civil society, non-governmental organizations and all other stakeholders;

(c) Urge the relevant organizations of the United Nations system to continue their joint activity to implement the Global Jobs Pact and the Social Protection Floor, in close cooperation with Member States, to further promote policy coherence and coordination;

(d) Urge the United Nations system to implement the outcome of the United Nations Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development, in particular its recommendations on policy changes and reforms, and the reform of the international financial and economic system, in support of the objectives of the Second Decade;

(e) Urge the United Nations system to support Member States in strengthening their macroeconomic policy capacity and national development strategies for achieving full employment and decent work;

(f) Encourage greater convergence and inter-agency collaboration in sharing knowledge, policy dialogue, facilitating synergies, mobilizing funds and providing technical assistance in the key policy areas underlying the decent work agenda, while avoiding duplication of efforts and strengthening system-wide policy coherence on employment issues;

(g) Urge the United Nations system to continue to pursue the implementation of the Chief Executives Board's *Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work* to improve coherence and efficiency in delivering as one on employment, decent work and poverty reduction.